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Free to Deployed Areas



'KABUBBLE' NO MORE?

Heavily guarded Afghan capital remains vulnerable

By JAD SLEIMAN and ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Karim Khan was stocking his shelves with fresh bread early one morning when a blast blew out the windows of his bakery in east Kabul and knocked him to the ground.

Insurgents had detonated a truck bomb beyond storming a foreign contractor complex 300 meters away, killing two Afghan security guards. That was Nov. 18. It was the fourth attack in the Afghan capital that week, and it wouldn't be the last.

"The Taliban can attack any part of Kabul in the presence of hundreds of thousands of foreign and Afghan security people," Khan said.

"What are the security people doing?"

Kalashnikov-toting private guards hired by businesses pat down and stand watch over patrons at Kabul's restaurants, grocery stores and gyms. The capital is home to the headquarters of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, the Afghan Army, intelligence services and the National Police.

Despite the presence of thousands of Western-trained security forces and a nationwide military strategy aimed at securing major urban centers, the insurgents still manage to carry out attacks on the capital.

SEE KABUL ON PAGE 3

Afghan security forces inspect the site of an attack in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Thursday, after a suicide bomber targeted a British Embassy convoy. Kabul has seen almost daily attacks in recent weeks, as insurgents turn to foreign targets. RAHMAT GUL/AP

US to aim for 'leaner, meaner' Iraqi army'

By MISSY RYAN
and ERIN CUNNINGHAM
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — After learning hard lessons rebuilding foreign militaries over the past dozen years, the U.S. military is shifting strategy against the Islamic State group, choosing to train a smaller number of Iraqi soldiers rather than trying to stand up an entire army anew.

At their peak, Iraqi combat forces, painstakingly built and paid

for by the United States during the last Iraq war, numbered about 400,000 troops. By the time the Islamist militant group launched its advance across northern Iraq in June, the Iraqi forces had shrunk by as much as half, depleted by years of corruption, absenteeism and decay.

When Islamic State militants completed their seizure of the city of Mosul, four Iraqi army divisions and another from the federal police had disappeared, shrinking the original combat force to as few as 85,000 active troops, according to expert estimates.

As the Obama administration scrambles to counter the Islamic State group, commanders have decided against trying to rebuild entire vanished divisions or introduce new personnel in underperforming, undermanned units across the country, according to U.S. officials. Rather, the officials said, the hope is to build nine new Iraqi army brigades — as many as 45,000 light-infantry soldiers — into a vanguard force that, together with Kurdish and Shiite fighters, can shatter the Islamic State group's grip on a third of the country.

"The idea is, at least in the first instance, to try and build a kind of leaner, meaner Iraqi army," said a senior U.S. official, who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss planning.

SEE ARMY ON PAGE 4

“
The 80 attacks in Kabul recorded so far this year is the highest since 2009, from when we consider our database to be comprehensive.”

Matthew Henman
IHS Jane's Terrorism
and Insurgency Centre

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'Assassin's Creed' adventure bogged down by bugs

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Black Friday crowds thin after rush on Thanksgiving Day

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We've gotten to a place where I'm like, 'Hey, I'm a 90-year-old cat lady!' And I'm never getting married."

— Kate Eggleston, a Pentagon employee who identifies herself as "asexual"

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The battle between Taylor Swift and Spotify



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MILITARY

Greenert spends Thanksgiving with deployed sailors

By HENDRICK SIMOES
Stars and Stripes

ABOARD THE USS CARL VINSON IN THE PERSIAN GULF — Even as the U.S. Navy's top officer was serving cake to enlisted sailors on the mess decks during a special Thanksgiving Day meal, flight deck crews were launching aircraft in support of the ongoing strikes against Islamic militants in Iraq and Syria.

Besides the 112 turkeys, some holiday decorations and the visit by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert, it was simply another day at work for the USS Carl Vinson crew. The ship has been fully committed to Operation Inherent Resolve since mid-October, when it took over the mission in the Persian Gulf from the USS George H.W. Bush.

"The next day, we were flying combat missions, and we haven't

stopped," said Capt. Karl Thomas, the Vinson's commander. Officials said the Vinson has flown more than 500 sorties in support of the operation.

"We are doing the mission on Thanksgiving Day and haven't heard one complaint about it," he said.

Sailors were treated to a traditional Thanksgiving dinner that included all the common fixings — a meal that took more than 14 hours of preparation to feed the 4,900 sailors aboard the ship.

It's the third consecutive year Greenert has spent Thanksgiving visiting sailors on ships deployed to the Middle East. He said he uses the opportunity to "listen and learn."

This year, lengthy deployments and grievances about current shipboard uniforms topped the list of concerns sailors expressed to Greenert.



HENDRICK SIMOES/Stars and Stripes

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert has Thanksgiving dinner with sailors aboard the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson while underway in the Persian Gulf.

Throughout the day, he visited several ships in the region but had dinner aboard the Vinson with E-6-and-below sailors.

Seaman Ekwele Nwalipenja, who was seated near Greenert at dinner, told Stars and Stripes he had a pleasant conversation with the admiral.

"It's encouraging and inspiring to talk to the CNO," he said.

"It's absolutely important that we get out and spend time with our sailors and have a face-to-face conversation with them on a regular basis," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Mike Stevens,

who accompanied Greenert on the visit. "I wanted to come out here and let them know that we care about them, and I'm not ashamed to say that we love them."

The San Diego-based Vinson is accompanied in the region by the guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill and the guided-missile destroyers USS Gridley, USS Sterett and USS Dewey. The entire strike group left home Aug. 22 on a scheduled deployment to the Western Pacific and the Middle East.

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Hagel carries on holiday tradition of phoning troops

By DAN LAMOTHE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, following a whirlwind few days in which he resigned as Pentagon chief, carried through on a holiday tradition on Thursday: making phone calls to a handful of U.S. servicemembers who are overseas.

Hagel made the phone calls from his home in Northern Virginia four days after President Barack Obama announced Hagel's resignation, a Pentagon official said. The secretary was not available for media interviews, but wanted to wish the troops a Happy Thanksgiving despite the recent controversy, the official said. He has quietly made phone calls to rank-and-file troops on holidays throughout his tenure in

"With everything going on with him, him even taking the time out of his day to call was awesome."

Marine Sgt. Matthew S. Ohler
deployed in Liberia

the Pentagon.

Hagel called a Marine in Liberia, a soldier in Afghanistan, an Air Force pilot in Kuwait and a sailor aboard the USS O'Kane, a Navy destroyer, the official said. They were selected by their services to take the call.

"With everything going on with him, him even taking the time out of his day to call was awesome," said Marine Sgt. Matthew S. Ohler, 24, who has been in Liberia since the summer maintaining MV-22B Osprey aircraft, which are being used to ferry medical

supplies around as part of the effort to combat the Ebola virus.

"It shows what an awesome person he is, even that he would take the time to talk to us," Ohler said in a phone interview. "He was more interested in what I was doing than what he was doing, and considering I like football, he wanted to talk about that."

Army 1st Lt. Darrel J. Guthrie II, 24, said in a phone call from Jalalabad, Afghanistan, that he appreciated that Hagel, a former Army infantry squad leader in Vietnam, wanted to know about

his experiences on deployment, but didn't ask too many questions about being in combat. Guthrie has been under fire several times, including during an attack on his unit this month involving suicide bombers, he said.

"It's not necessarily the most enjoyable things to talk about," Guthrie said. "He was really good about asking about it briefly, but not prying too deeply."

The other two to take calls were Air Force Capt. Derek Van De Wege, 27, a C-17 pilot at Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait, and Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Rudanna P. Skipper, 24.

Skipper's ship, the O'Kane, is in the Persian Gulf. Van De Wege has been flying airdrop missions in support of the U.S. mission in Iraq, delivering food, water and other supplies.

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STARS AND STRIPES



WAR/MILITARY

Kabul: Attacks in Afghan capital this year could set a record, expert says

FROM FRONT PAGE

For much of the war, attacks in Kabul had been rare compared with Baghdad, leading to jokes about the “Kabubble,” where foreigners and Afghans were largely insulated from the violence of the south and east.

So far this year, however, the number of attacks in Kabul is double that of 2013, and they may set a record, according to figures compiled by Matthew Heuman, manager of London-based IHS Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre.

“The 80 attacks in Kabul recorded so far this year is the highest since 2009, from when we consider our database to be comprehensive,” he said in mid-November. It was unlikely, he said, that there were more attacks between 2001 and 2008.

The attacks are part of a trend of the Taliban's stepping up pressure on government forces as the U.S. and its allies speed the pullout of combat forces. On Friday, The Associated Press reported, an Afghan official said six Afghan soldiers were killed in an attack on the former NATO base in Helmand province, which the coalition handed over to the Afghans last month.

High-security area targeted

In Kabul, several recent attacks have penetrated the tight inner rings of security around neighborhoods where foreigners work and live. Even the heavily guarded, upscale Kabul neighborhood that is home to foreign embassies and missions — a kind of fortress city within a larger one — isn't safe.

In late October, two blasts minutes apart shook buildings as two rockets sailed over the city's defenses and crashed into the protected area. Sirens at the U.S. Embassy were soon blaring.

Then, on Thanksgiving Day, the Taliban claimed responsibility for two attacks. One, on a foreign guest house in an area near the U.S. and other embassies, involved a suicide bomber and gunmen who tried to storm the building. An hours-long gunbattle ensued and police said three attackers were killed. A Nepalese guard was wounded. Earlier in the day, a massive car bomb attack on a British convoy in the east of the city, killed six people, including a British security guard. A few days earlier, an insurgent attack killed two American soldiers, including a command sergeant major who trained Afghan forces.

“Attacks around the capital have increased significantly this year, in part because of the flurry of violence that surrounded the elections,” said Graeme Smith, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group who is based in Kabul. “Insurgents took advantage of the media spotlight during the campaign period to launch high-profile attacks, particularly in the first three months of 2014.”

The attacks continued, even after the disputed vote was resolved with the inauguration in September of new President Ashraf Ghani and the naming of his rival, Abdullah Abdullah, as a chief executive officer in a power-sharing government.

On the morning of the inauguration, Sept. 29, a magnetic bomb claimed by the Taliban shored off the side of a government jeep, injuring the driver. Schoolchildren crowded the site, watching blood drain into an open ditch.

During the next 48 hours, a series of suicide bombings killed more than a dozen Afghan soldiers and civilians. The Associated Press counted 10 attacks in the capital during Ghani's first month in office.

Among attacks in November were two aimed at high-profile targets. On Nov. 9, a Taliban bomber carrying a bundle of official-looking documents managed to



PHOTOS BY RAHIMAT GUL/AP

An Afghan man and a security guard are visible through the shattered window of a damaged car Thursday at the site of a suicide attack in Kabul, Afghanistan.

bluff his way to the third floor of the Kabul Police headquarters and detonated his explosive vest outside the police chief's office. One officer was killed and several others were injured, while the police chief was unhurt.

A week later, another suicide bomber killed three people in the capital in an attempt to assassinate a prominent female lawmaker.

“The point of these attacks is to try to make everyone frightened and strike at the heart of the city and the government,” said Kate Clark, a Kabul-based analyst. “It's a different war in Kabul than in the rest of the country.”

Following the Thanksgiving Day attacks, Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqi echoed that sentiment. “The message they want to send is clear — security is not easy to come by,” he said.

In far-flung rural provinces, the Taliban have massed in hundreds for open battle with Afghan security forces. They've succeeded against isolated ANA posts, overrunning thinly manned police checkpoints and even briefly threatening government control of district centers.

In contrast, Kabul remains a heavily defended city, with a substantial part of the Afghan army stationed in and around it. The Taliban can't realistically hope to retake the capital any time soon — and that may not be their intent. They have managed to remind residents that they are far from safe and to raise questions about the new government's ability to ensure security after the bulk of international forces leave at the end of the year.

Attacking as foreigners leave

After 13 years of war, American and allied troops are preparing to shift from an active combat role to an advise-and-assist mission called Resolute Support at the end of December.

Insurgents have been staging attacks on foreign bases across the country while international forces are packing up to leave, hoping to underscore the Taliban's claim to have driven out foreign troops.

“After a strong jihad by the mujahadeen, the foreign enemy is defeated,” Zabihullah



Afghan security forces inspect the site Thursday in Kabul where a suicide bomber attacked a British Embassy vehicle, killing one British and several Afghan civilians and wounding more than 30 others, officials said.

Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, told Stars and Stripes. “Foreign forces left their bases in the countryside and are now in Kabul. That is why there is an increase in our attacks in Kabul.”

Gen. Dawlat Waziri, deputy spokesman for the Defense Ministry, said the Afghan police are responsible for protecting the capital against such attacks. A division of the Afghan National Army is available in Kabul to address security issues when needed, he said.

Hashmatullah Stanakzai, spokesman for Kabul police, said the Taliban are hoping to “avenge” their failure to disrupt the disputed presidential election and the recent signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement, which lays out the terms for U.S. forces to remain in Afghanistan past this year.

He also pointed to a recent internal security report that shows the Taliban are now focusing their efforts on just six provinces, including Kabul's eponymous province, down from 22.

“We can't foil all the attacks on Kabul. It will take time until we get more modern equipment for checking the vehicles and getting intelligence information” he said.

“But we are committed to fight the insurgents and try to foil their attacks as much as we can. We have foiled many attacks in Kabul recently.”

U.S. military officials acknowledge the challenges facing the security forces they have trained but say they are confident the Afghans can secure their country and its capital in coming years.

The Afghan National Security Forces “are becoming more capable and stronger each day,” said Lt. Cmdr. Justin K. Hadley, an ISAF spokesman. “It is important to put the Kabul attacks in perspective. While there has been an increase in IED attacks in Kabul province in 2014 compared to 2013, the number of effective attacks [claiming casualties] has remained static.”

In years past, Kabul's security forces sometimes would find themselves in prolonged fights with attacking insurgents. More recent attacks often begin and end quickly, with security forces swiftly killing attackers.

“We are not apprehensive about ending the combat mission,” Hadley said.

About 9,800 U.S. forces will remain in Afghanistan next year, but the precise nature of their future advise-and-assist mission remains unclear and dependent on the Taliban, who continue to assert themselves.

The New York Times reported recently that President Barack Obama quietly had expanded the role American forces could play in 2015, allowing their participation in direct combat against the Taliban in some instances and continued close air support of Afghan forces by American aircraft.

Washington's apparent concern for the nation's future security is shared by foreign workers and the local populace.

A major international nongovernmental organization has placed a strict curfew on its employees in response to the spate of attacks, and residents like Khan, the baker, have more faith in the abilities of the Taliban than those of government and foreign forces.

“They can assassinate a person in the daylight, put sticky bombs during night and carry out big attacks like today,” Khan said. “No one can stop them.”

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Rebels push forward in southern Syria

By BASSEM MROUE
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — Syrian rebels backed by the United States are making their biggest gains yet south of the capital, Damascus, capturing a string of towns from government forces and aiming to carve out a swath of territory leading to the doorstep of President Bashar Assad's seat of power.

The advances appear to be a rare visible success story from efforts by the U.S. and its allies to train and arm moderate rebel fighters.

The rebel forces are believed to include fighters who graduated from a nearly 2-year-old CIA training program based in Syria's southern neighbor, Jordan. The group known as the Friends of Syria, including Jordan, France the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, are backing the rebels with money and weapons, said Gen. Ibrahim Jbawi, the spokesman for the Free Syrian Army's eastern front.

The gains are a contrast to northern Syria, where U.S.-backed rebels are collapsing in the face of an assault by Islamic militants.



Syrian opposition fighters fire at government forces in September 2013 in Daraa al-Balad, Syria.

Notably, in the south, the rebels are working together with fighters from al-Qaida's Syria branch, whose battle-hardened militants have helped them gain the momentum against government forces. The cooperation points to the difficulty in American efforts to build up "moderate" factions

while isolating militants.

"The goal is to reach the capital ... because there is no way to bring down the regime without reaching Damascus," said Ahmad al-Masaleh, an opposition activist in Daraa.

But few are under the illusion that the offensive in the south can

loosen Assad's grip on power in the near future. The Syrian leader has benefited from the U.S.-led coalition's war against the Islamic State group, which has had the side effect of blocking up Assad's forces to focus on more moderate rebels elsewhere in the country. Government forces have seized several key areas around the capital.

Rebels in the south say they hope the new push will be just enough to pressure Assad to negotiate a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Jbawi said the international support for the assault "is not enough to let the rebels win the battle militarily. They are backing [us] to pressure Bashar Assad's regime to bring him to the negotiating table."

The Islamic State group's onslaught in Syria and Iraq has given greater urgency to international efforts to find some sort of solution for Syria's conflict, which has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced millions. Previous attempts and two rounds of peace talks in Switzerland earlier this year failed to make any progress as each side remained convinced

it can win the war militarily.

The U.N. envoy to Syria, Stefan de Mistura, has now proposed local cease-fires starting with the northern city of Aleppo as a building block for a wider solution — an idea that Assad has said is "worth studying."

Speaking by telephone, Jbawi said 54 rebel factions consisting of 30,000 fighters are taking part in the battles in southern Syria. Activists say that Jordan is also facilitating the rebels' push by arming some rebels and allowing them to cross freely to and from the country.

The rebel offensive could eventually link opposition fighters' positions in Daraa and Quneitra with Damascus' rebel-held Ghouta suburbs.

"The military objective is to secure lines of communication and to put pressure on the capital," said Faysal Itani, a resident fellow at the Atlantic Council.

However, despite the rebel advance, Assad's forces remain strong in the area, holding bases in critical locations that the rebels will find difficult to capture, he said.

Army: New 'national guard' planned to supplement security forces' efforts

FROM FRONT PAGE

The development of a spearhead force is unlikely to address the decay across Syria's security forces and institutions, a more complex, deeply rooted phenomenon that undermines the country's stability. The force is also insufficient on its own to retake strategic cities such as Mosul.

But U.S. officials and others said the training of a smaller number of high-quality units could enable Iraqi security forces to make significant headway against the Islamic State group — supplemented eventually, U.S. officials hope, by a new "national guard" that could bring an array of armed groups operating across Iraq under provincial government control.

'Fantasy' fades

"Before the Mosul crisis, we were living in a fantasy," said Hakim al-Zamil, head of the Iraqi parliament's security and defense committee. "We thought the army could defend the country. We tried them. But what happened revealed the truth to us."

U.S. officials blame former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki

for the decline in the quality of Iraqi forces after the U.S. military withdrawal in 2011. They say the Shiite leader assigned commanders on the basis of sectarian loyalty, diminishing military capabilities and undermining morale.

Under corrupt leadership, payrolls were padded with "ghost soldiers" and payments issued for troops long dead — a system that not only resulted in undermanned military units but contributed to the difficulty of assessing the size and strength of the security forces.

According to Michael Knights, a fellow with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy who has been assembling a detailed analysis of remaining Iraqi military units, army brigades that were supposed to comprise as many as 4,000 men have regularly included fewer than half that number.

"There was a huge disconnect" between the military Iraq had on paper and what it looked like in reality, a senior U.S. defense official said on the condition of anonymity.

The problems laid bare this summer were a surprise even to those involved in the 2003-2011

initiative to rebuild Iraq's military, an undertaking that cost more than \$25 billion.

The Obama administration has been encouraged by the initial reforms that Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who took over from al-Maliki in August, has made. This month, al-Abadi replaced more than 20 senior military commanders. He has also eliminated the commander-in-chief office that al-Maliki had established to tighten his grip on the military. How far al-Abadi — seeking to keep a fragile national unity government intact — can push those reforms is unknown.

Eying what's possible

Even when the nine army brigades complete their two-month training, those more competent troops will represent a modest share of the larger Iraqi army, which Knights estimated comprised just 36 active brigades after the defeat in Mosul. The United States also plans to train three brigades of Kurdish peshmarga forces.

"Whether [the training plan] is adequate or not, it might be what's

possible right now," Knights said.

Retired Army Lt. Gen. Jim Dubik, who headed the U.S. training of Iraqi forces from 2007-2008, said Iraqi troops would need to progressively clear militant-held territory, as U.S. forces did during President George W. Bush's troop surge, but without a large U.S. ground force for support.

"It's possible, but it will take longer," Dubik said.

The vanguard force, for instance, would be smaller than what is required to retake Mosul, where hostility toward Baghdad's Shiite-led government has long fueled support for insurgents. Officials hope an offensive to reclaim the city can occur in the first quarter of 2015.

Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said the U.S. would need roughly 80,000 troops, would be needed to attempt an assault on Mosul.

U.S. officials are backing a longer-term Iraqi plan to restructure the army, transforming a force that has supported three divisions to 15 divisions into one of seven to eight slightly larger-than-normal divisions: one armored, two mech-

anized and five light infantry. The senior defense official said. That is in addition to Iraqi special-forces troops who have borne the brunt of the fighting this year.

The success of plans to create a smaller army that is focused on Iraq's external defense will hinge on a second initiative, to build a "national guard" to provide security.

Zamil said his committee was preparing to examine a draft of the law needed to establish the guard. An early copy of the draft law that was leaked to the Iraqi media showed the program would seek to recruit former officers from the Saddam Hussein-era military, some of whom are believed to support the Islamic State group.

Another senior U.S. official, also speaking on the condition of anonymity, said he Iraqi government has integrated a "couple hundred" tribesmen into Iraqi forces as part of a "bridging solution" before the national guard can be established.

Sheik Natin al-Gaoud, a tribal elder from Anbar, expressed tentative support for the program: "We must have guarantees we will not be abandoned."

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WAR ON TERRORISM

With incentives and force, militants subdue tribes

By RYAN LUCAS
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — The Islamic State group is employing multiple tactics to subdue the Sunni Muslim tribes in Syria and Iraq under its rule, winning some with gifts everything from cars to feed for their animals — while brutally suppressing those that resist with mass killings.

The result is that the extremists face little immediate threat of an uprising by the tribes, which are traditionally the most powerful social institution in the large areas of eastern Syria and northern and western Iraq controlled by the group. Any U.S. drive to try to turn tribesmen against the militants, as the Americans did with Sunnis during the Iraq war, faces an uphill battle.

Some tribes in Syria and Iraq already oppose the Islamic State group. For example, the Shammar tribe, which spans the countries' border, has fought alongside Kurdish forces against the extremists in Iraq. The U.S. and Iraqi governments have proposed creating a national guard program that would arm tribesmen and pay them to fight, though the effort has yet to get off the ground.

But in Syria in particular, tribes have no outside patron to bankroll

or arm them to take on IS, leaving them with few options other than to bend to Islamic State domination or to flee.

"There are people who want to go back and fight them," said Hassan Hassan, an analyst with the Delma Institute in Abu Dhabi. "But the circumstances now mean that you can't provoke ISIS because the strategy they've followed and tactics are to prevent any revolt from inside."

The rulers of the self-styled caliphate have mastered techniques of divide and rule. Tribes are powerful institutions that command the loyalty of their members across the largely desert regions of Syria and Iraq. But they are also far from cohesive. Large tribes are divided up into smaller subtribes and clans that can be pitted against each other. Such divisions also emerge on their own, often in connection to control over local resources like oil wells or land.

Also, the Islamic State group, itself, has roots in the tribes. Though hundreds of foreign fighters have flocked to join the group, most of its leaders and foot soldiers are Iraqis and Syrians — and often belong to tribes.

In eastern Syria's Deir el-Zur province, for example, the Ogeida is one of the largest tribes. One of its major clans, the Bu

Jamel, has been a staunch opponent of the extremists. Another, the Bakir, long ago allied itself to the group.

IS operatives use threats or offers of money or fuel to win public pledges of loyalty from senior tribal sheikhs. The group has also wooed younger tribesmen with economic enticements and promises of positions within IS, undermining the traditional power structure of the tribe.

"They offer me many sweeteners," said Abu Ali al-Badie, a tribal leader from the central city of Palmyra in Syria's Homs province. "They go to the tribes and say, 'Why are you fighting against Muslims? We'll give you weapons and cars and guns, and we'll fight together.'"

"They offer diesel and fuel. They bring barley and animal feed from Iraq," he said. "They build wells at their own expense for the tribes and they say, 'Others have neglected your needs.'"

In Syria, IS has won the acceptance of many tribesmen in Raqqa and Deir el-Zur provinces by ending chaos that reigned when the areas were controlled by a patchwork of rebel warlords. IS provides services including electricity, fuel, water and telephone lines, as well as flour for bakeries, said Haima Dulcan, a researcher at the University of St. Andrews



AL-KERR News/AP

This undated image posted on a Jihadist militant Twitter page earlier this month claims to show Sunni Muslim prisoners from the Syrian Shueifat tribes held by the Islamic State group at an undisclosed location in Syria.

Center for Syrian Studies.

"Things have started to become stable to a degree, and this is something that people were really desperate about," said Dukhan.

The group has "tribal affairs" officials to handle relations with the tribes, calibrating its style to local dynamics. Often they will allow loyal tribesmen to run their communities' services, said Hassan.

The group also has removed its own commanders who caused tension with tribes in their areas. The idea, Hassan said, is "to remove some of the toxins."

At the same time, the group sends a clear message to those who resist. In August, IS militants shot and beheaded hundreds of members of the Shueifat tribe in eastern Syria. Activists reported death tolls ranging from 200 to 700. Photographs in the Islamic State's English-language "Dabiq" maga-

zine showed black-clad fighters shooting prisoners said to be Shueifat, lined up on the sandy ground.

In Iraq, IS killed more than 200 men, women and children from the Al Bu Nimr tribe in Anbar province, apparently in revenge for the tribe's siding with security forces and, in the past, with American troops. It has also shot dead several men from the Al Bu Fahd tribe.

"Everyone is hiding or fled. They will chop us in pieces if they see us," said Sheikh Naim al-Gaud, a leader in the Al Bu Nimr. "They want us to support them and to join their fight. In return, they say they will let us live in peace."

As a result, Dukhan says there's little chance for a revolt unless tribes are confident the extremists are losing.

"I think that for the time being, seeing a large-scale uprising against IS is just a fantasy."

Islamic State struggles to run Mosul's health system

By ERIN CUNNINGHAM
The Washington Post

BAGHDAD — After storming the Iraqi city of Mosul in June, the brutal Islamic State quickly solidified its control. Gunmen enforced its laws, and supportive imams preached at the mosques.

But the jihadists were missing something — doctors. So last month, the Islamic State issued an ultimatum to physicians who had fled: Return to work, or we'll seize your property and you can never come back.

The Islamic State's efforts to run Mosul's health care system provide a glimpse into its efforts to build a caliphate, or Islamic state, in Iraq and Syria. Despite their victories on the battlefield, the jihadists have struggled as everyday administrators in Mosul, with the city's hospitals grappling with daily power outages and shortages of medicine. The Sunni fighters have also imposed measures that have alienated staff and compromised the lives of patients, doctors say.

The Islamic State's rigidity and inexperience ultimately may cost it support in areas where some Sunni residents initially welcomed the group as an alternative to the Shiite-led central government. Already, the Islamic State has been forced to give ground

on some of its stringent policies, such as barring male and female doctors from working together.

But the group continues to impose a harsh version of Islamic rule, according to medical personnel at four of the city's seven hospitals, who spoke via telephone on the condition of anonymity because of security concerns. Female staff members, including doctors, are not allowed to work night shifts at the hospitals, they said. Female doctors must wear full-face veils.

Little dissent is tolerated. One doctor in Mosul said that earlier this month, he witnessed a patient arguing with a physician affiliated with the Islamic State. The next day, militants brought the patient to the hospital lobby, where they whipped him and forced him to apologize to the physician.

"Of course, those of us who didn't join them, we are all living in fear," the doctor said.

The Islamic State emerged as a major player in the Syrian civil war in 2012 and 2013, and first tried governing in smaller cities in rural Syria. In its de facto capital in Raqqa — which has about 570,000 residents — the group has established Islamic law courts and has revived clinics damaged by the war between the rebels and the Syrian govern-

ment. It has even managed to run nearby oil refineries.

An August report by REACH, a U.N.-linked disaster-mapping service, said basic services in the Syrian city were reported to have improved somewhat after the Islamic State took over in January, after months of battles that had crippled much of the infrastructure.

But Mosul, in Iraq's north, is about twice as populous. And unlike Raqqa, which is part of an extensive region controlled by the Islamic State, Mosul has been largely isolated since it fell to the militants in June. The central government in Baghdad shut off its power supply, and Iraqi security forces, Shiite militias and Kurdish peshmerga forces control roads into Mosul.

One of the Islamic State's first edicts after taking over Mosul was to impose a dress code for female staff members at the city's hospitals, requiring them to wear head scarves, full-face veils and gloves.

The decree shocked a city in which most women dress conservatively but had never been forced to cover their faces while working.

Then the fighters moved to abolish family-planning programs and halted the distribution of contraceptives, which had been available to married couples.

Although the jihadists try to retain local bureaucrats to keep institutions functioning, they promote loyalists and commanders to top government positions, including at the hospitals.

"They are fighters, and this

is civilian work," said a female doctor. "The people are not their priority."

In September and October, at least five doctors — men and women — were killed in Mosul, rights activists in northern Iraq said. The activists said it was unclear whether the doctors were executed because of their work. Also in October, the activists said, militants arrested a pharmacist for selling medicine to a woman who was not considered properly veiled. The pharmacist has not been heard from since.

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS
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MECKLENBURG COUNTY**

In the District Court

**Joseph Todd Smith vs.
Laura Kim Jewell, 14-CVD-16599**

To Laura Kim Jewell:
TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled-action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: Absolve. Divorce. You are required to make defense to such a pleading not later than January 1, 2015 and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This the 12th day of November, 2014.
Sabrina Blain
The Law Firm, P.C.,
301 McCullough Drive, 4th Floor
Charlotte, NC 28262

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NATION

Ferguson protests move to retail stores

The Associated Press

MANCHESTER, Mo. — Dozens of people interrupted holiday shopping at major retailers around the St. Louis area late Thursday and early Friday to speak out about a grand jury's decision not to indict the officer who shot and killed Michael Brown.

Other Black Friday protests are planned in other shopping centers around the nation.

About two dozen people chanted "no justice, no peace, no racist police" and "no more Black Friday" after police moved them out of a Wal-Mart during an early-morning protest in Manchester.

Officers warned that protesters risked arrest if they didn't move at least 50 feet from the store's entrance, then began advancing in unison toward the protesters until they moved farther into the parking lot. The mostly black group of protesters chanted in the faces of the officers — most of whom were white — as shoppers looked on.

"We want to really let the world know that it is no longer business



J.B. FORBES, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH/AP

Protesters of the grand jury decision in the Michael Brown shooting chant slogans at the St. Louis Galleria mall Wednesday evening in Richmond Heights. Most stayed in the mall for about 15 minutes and then left peacefully without confrontation with a large police presence.

as usual," said Chenjerai Kumanyika, an assistant professor at Clemson University, who added the group had already visited several big box stores that were open for Black Friday.

Protesters spent a few minutes at each store, shouting inside. According to Johnetta Elzie, who had been tweeting and posting videos of the protests, demonstrations occurred at a Wal-Mart and

a Target in Brentwood, two Wal-Marts in St. Charles and one Wal-Mart in Manchester.

There were no visible protests in Ferguson on Thursday night, though the National Guard again stood watch. Authorities said there were no arrests.

Since Monday night's announcement that Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson, who is white, wouldn't be indicted for fatally shooting the unarmed, black 18-year-old in August, protests have occurred in Ferguson and across the country. A dozen buildings and some cars were torched in Ferguson on Monday night and dozens were arrested, but the protests have grown more peaceful as the week went on.

But on Thursday night, no police officers stood sentry outside the Ferguson police station.

On that downtown street, beneath a lighted "Season's Greetings" garland, three children used paintbrushes to decorate the plywood covering many storefront windows that had been put up to foil potential vandals. One

quoted from "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss: "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not."

"We thought we'd do what we could to make it a little more attractive and then try to bring the kids into it and get them involved in making the businesses appear a little less scary, depressing," said Leah Bailey as her son, Dennis, 7, climbed a ladder to finish an orange drangle.

Several hours after dark, a few people continued painting, but there was no visible protest activity. National Guard troops occasionally patrolled the area and surrounding neighborhoods in vehicles and on foot.

Since the grand jury's decision, protests have taken place across the country. Most have been peaceful. But at least 130 demonstrators who refused to disperse during a Los Angeles protest were arrested Wednesday night, while 35 people were detained in Oakland following a march that deteriorated into unrest and vandalism, according to police officials.

For some, location of Brown's hands irrelevant

By DAVID A. LIEB
AND HOLBROOK MOHR
The Associated Press

FERGUSON, Mo. — The word spread within minutes of Michael Brown's death — a young, black man with his hands raised in surrender had just been shot by a white cop.

Soon, "Hands Up. Don't Shoot!" became a rallying cry for protesters in the streets of this St. Louis suburb and a symbol nationwide of racial inequality for those who believe that minorities are too often the targets of overzealous police.

Yet the witness accounts contained in thousands of pages of grand jury documents reviewed by The Associated Press show many variations about whether Brown's hands were actually raised and if so, how high.

To some, it doesn't matter whether Brown's hands literally were raised, because his death has come to symbolize a much bigger movement.

"He wasn't shot because of the placement of his hands; he was shot because he was a big, black, scary man," said James Cox, 28, a food server who protested this week in Oakland, Calif.

Some witnesses said the 18-year-old had his hands held high toward the sky as Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson gunned him down midday Aug. 9. Others thought they saw his hands partially raised, about shoulder high. To some witnesses, his palms appeared out, as if surrendering. To others, his palms seemed open, as if glancing at his wounded hand or gesturing with an attitude of "what are you going to do about it." Some said Brown's hands weren't raised at all.

The truth may never be certain. Despite a three-month state grand jury investigation and an ongoing federal probe, no one has publicly disclosed any photos or videos capturing exactly what transpired.

After a Missouri prosecutor announced Monday night that the grand jury had decided not to indict Wilson, the symbolic chant of "Hands Up. Don't Shoot!" rang out from protesters from Los Angeles to New York to London.

In Ferguson, some protesters have been wearing shirts with the phrase as they demonstrate outside the police station.

Protester Taylor Gruenloh, 32, a white man from nearby Florissant, said that while he believes there's truth to claims that Brown had his hands raised when shot, the lack of proof makes little difference to protesters who have found it to be a unifying force.

"Even if you don't find that it's true, it's a valid rallying cry," he said. "It's just a metaphor."

Brown had been walking with a friend down the center of Canfield Drive when Wilson, passing in his patrol vehicle, told them to move to the sidewalk. They did not. Wilson testified that he then realized Brown was a robbery suspect. A scuffle broke out at the vehicle. Wilson fired a shot that hit Brown in the right hand. When Brown ran, Wilson gave chase. At some point, Brown stopped and turned toward Wilson, who opened fire.

Wilson told the grand jury that Brown had his left hand in a fist at his side and his right hand under his shirt at his waist, and was charging toward him.

The phrase "hands up" is peppered throughout the grand jury documents, as prosecutors and



DAVID CARSON, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH/AP

A crowd gathers Aug. 9 near the scene where Michael Brown was fatally shot by police in Ferguson, Mo.

investigators tried to clarify exactly what witnesses saw. In quite a few cases, it's unclear exactly what the witnesses say they saw, because the gestures they made for grand jurors weren't described in the transcripts.

Some of the witness accounts of the shooting differed so much they didn't seem like the same scene.

"I saw him in the middle of the street on his knees with hands up," one witness said. "(The) officer came up to him and shot him in his head and he fell."

Another witness was insistent that Brown was on his feet and

did not raise his hands.

"The officer was already in pursuit of him. He stopped. He did turn, he did some sort of body gesture, I'm not sure what it was, but I know it was a body gesture," the witness said. "And I could say for sure he never put his hands up after he did his body gesture, he ran towards the officer full charge."

In some regards, the disputed circumstances of Brown's death highlight the inherent troubles with eyewitness testimony.

"It's difficult for people under the best of circumstances to ac-

curately report what happened," said Elizabeth Brondolo, a psychology professor specializing in the effects of race on mental and physical health at St. John's University in New York.

For Wilson and others at the shooting scene, what they say they saw may depend not just on their vantage point, but also their view of life, she said.

"The truth always really matters, but it's important to recognize that past experience to stereotypes also influences the perception of hands being raised," Brondolo said.

NATION



CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

President Barack Obama addresses a crowd in Chicago on Tuesday.

Obama unleashed

President defies Republican election victories, moves in opposite direction

By DAVID LIGHTMAN
AND ANITA KUMAR

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama has spent November acting with a defiant fury, moving with little regard for the message voters sent at the polls.

Instead of reaching out to Republicans who won control of next year's Congress Nov. 4, he's charged ahead with initiatives that infuriate the victors, prompting critics to label him a "king" or "emperor."

This week, the Obama administration began an effort aimed at easing smog-related pollution. Earlier this month, Obama took executive action on immigration and climate change. The White House has suggested he block the Keystone XL pipeline. He's vowed to have the federal government regulate Internet access.

This damn-the-GOP-torpedoes burst is dramatically different from the contrition and soul searching other presidents endured after their parties suffered stinging defeats.

George W. Bush worked with the new Democratic-controlled Congress after the 2006 election to craft economic stimulus legislation. Bill Clinton in 1994 overhauled his political team and would work to craft a bipartisan welfare overhaul. After Republicans lost Senate control in 1986, Ronald Reagan brought in Washington insider Howard Baker, who had been Senate majority leader, to run his staff.

Obama instead draws his already insular circle tighter. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel doesn't spout the White House line in public, so he's out. Chief of Staff Denis McDonough becomes a frequent visitor to Congress but doesn't heed warnings from Republican leaders that an immigration order would be political poison.

"Free at last, free at last from the bondage of (Senate Majority Leader) Harry Reid, threats from the Republican leadership, and persistent press 'wimp' criticism," said Stephen Wayne, a presidential scholar at Georgetown University. "Now he can do what he thinks is right and to the extent possible

do so with the help of loyal compatriots that believe in him and his priorities," he said.

Two factors appear to be driving Obama. "He wants to prove he's still relevant," said Darrell West, vice president and director of governance studies at the Brookings Institution.

And engaged, said White House senior adviser Dan Pfeiffer. "Typically, when you have a change in power in Congress, the new congressional majority dominates the conversation and drives the discussion," Pfeiffer said. "Since right after the election, the president has been driving the discussions, moving forward aggressively on core priorities."

Rather than move toward the Republicans since the elections on Nov. 4, Obama has defied them:

■ **Nov. 10:** He declared strong support for net neutrality, the idea that Internet content be freely available and subject to government regulation to protect consumers. Opening the door to government regulation infuriated conservatives.

■ **Nov. 12:** During Obama's Asia trip, the United States and China unexpectedly agreed to new targets for greenhouse gas emissions designed to help combat climate change. Republicans complained that Obama unilaterally decided the U.S. would cut greenhouse gas emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels in the next 11 years.

■ **Nov. 20:** Obama announced he would unilaterally protect millions of immigrants who are in the United States illegally from deportation.

■ **Nov. 24:** Obama pushed out Hagel, a former Republican senator. It was widely reported that Hagel was dismissed after a series of disagreements. Previous Obama defense secretaries complained that national security discussions were often insular and guided from the White House predominantly by domestic politics.

■ **Nov. 26:** The Obama administration said it will move to implement tougher air quality standards for ozone. House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, branded the plan "massive new regulation" that would "cost our economy millions of jobs."

By BILL BARROW

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Southern Democrats are joining others in the party who say that a return to advocating to lift people out of economic hardship and emphasizing spending on education and public works will re-energize black voters and attract whites as well.

It's time to draw a line in the sand and not surrender our brand, Rickey Cole, the party chairman in Mississippi, said. He believes candidates have distanced themselves from the past half-century of Democratic principles.

"We don't need a New Coke formula," Cole said. "The problem is we've been out there trying to peddle Tab and RC Cola."

Cole and other Southern Democrats acknowledge divisions with prominent populists such as Hillary Rodham Clinton, who is expected to run for president in 2016, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Yet they see merit in pushing stronger voting rights laws, tighter bank regulation, labor-friendly policies such as a higher minimum wage and other familiar party themes.

Democratic politics have become a tough sell in the conservative South. A major challenge in the region is defeating candidates who can win high-profile races now that Republicans, who scored well in midterm elections earlier this month, dominate the leadership in state legislatures and across statehouse offices.

Georgia Democrats thought legacy candidates were the answer. But Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn, former Sen. Sam Nunn's daughter, and gubernatorial challenger Jason Carter, former President Jimmy Carter's grandson, each fell short by about 8 percentage points despite well-funded campaigns and ambitious voter-registration drives.

Arkansas Democrats lost an open governor's seat and two-term Sen. Mark Pryor. Louisiana Sen. Mary Landrieu led an eight-candidate primary but faces steep odds in a Dec. 6 runoff. Democrats' closest statewide loss in the South was North Carolina Sen. Kay Hagan's 1.7 percentage point margin of defeat.

Exit polling suggests Democrats did not get the black turnout they needed and lost badly among whites. Nunn and Carter got fewer than 1 in 4 white votes, while Pryor took 31 percent and Landrieu 18 percent.

Should Landrieu lose, Democrats will be left without a single governor, U.S. senator or legislative chamber under their control from the Carolinas westward to Texas.

J.P. Morrell, a state senator from New Orleans, faulted a muddled message that began with candidates avoiding President Barack Obama. "You have to articulate why the economic policies we advocate as Democrats actually benefit people on the ground," Morrell said.

In Georgia, Nunn supported a minimum-wage increase and gender-pay equity, but her television ads focused on ending partisan



AP photos

Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn, top, former Sen. Sam Nunn's daughter, and gubernatorial challenger Jason Carter, above, former President Jimmy Carter's grandson, each fell short by about 8 percentage points in Georgia elections despite well-funded campaigns and ambitious voter-registration drives.

rancor. Carter mostly accused Republican Gov. Nathan Deal of shortchanging public education. Nunn and Carter supported Medicaid expansion under Obama's health overhaul, but neither emphasized that argument in television advertising.

"No real economic message got through," said Vincent Fort, a state senator from Atlanta.

Georgia's Democratic chairman, DuBoise Porter, defended Carter and Nunn as "world-class

candidates" who can run again. He said Democrats "proved Georgia can be competitive in 2016," but he cautioned against looking for a nominee other than Clinton. "She puts us in play," he said.

In an interview, Carter focused more on tactics than on broad messaging, saying the party must register minority voters and continue outreach to whites. "If 120,000 people change their mind in this election, it comes out differently," he said. "But it takes a lot of time to build those relationships ... You can't expect it to happen in one year."

Gary Pearce, a Democratic strategist and commentator in North Carolina, said Hagan's margin in a GOP wave offers hope for 2016, when statewide executive offices will be on the ballot. Fresh arguments, he said, "will have to come from younger Democrats in the cities." He pointed to several young Democratic candidates who won county commission seats in Wake County, home to Raleigh.

Cole, the Mississippi chairman, acknowledged that any new approach won't close the party's gap in the South on abortion, same-sex marriage and guns, and said Democrats intensify that cultural disconnect with "identity politics."

While the party's positions on gay rights, minority voting access, women's rights and immigration are not wrong, Cole said, "those people who don't see themselves in those groups say, 'What have the Democrats got for me?'"

Unapologetic populism, he said, would "explain better that the Democratic Party is for justice and opportunity — with no qualifiers — for everyone."

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NATION

Second act of shopping frenzy gets started

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Stores are welcoming a second wave of shoppers in what has become a two-day kickoff to the holiday shopping season.

The big question: How much will Thanksgiving shopping hurt Black Friday, which is relinquishing its status as the frenzied start of the holiday shopping season?

Based on early reads, the crowds were thin early Friday morning in parts of the country, but traffic is expected to pick up throughout the day. Analysts and store executives were heartened to see that shoppers seem to be buying more than just the doorbusters.

Bridget McNabb, of Kansas City, Kan., stopped at a mostly empty suburban Target about 5:30 a.m. Friday after a solid day of holiday cooking. "I started the dishwasher and came in," she said.

Her goal was a coffee pot for her niece. But first, the 55-year-old — who said she was "old enough to know better" than to be out so early — stopped at the electronics department.



MELISSA KEY, THE GOLDSBORO (N.C.) NEWS-ARGUS/AP

Leigh Sutton asks a friend for an opinion as she shops for boots on sale Friday at Berkeley Mall in Goldsboro, N.C.

"They have a great deal on a TV my husband wants to get his hands on," she said. She was only momentarily disappointed after a store worker told her the \$119 TV had sold out the night before.



DAVID PIKE, (HARLINGEN, TEXAS) VALLEY MORNING STAR/AP

People shop at Bass Pro Shop on Friday in Harlingen, Texas.

"I'll pop online later," she said. Last year, sales on Black Friday slumped 13.2 percent to \$9.74 billion, according to ShopperTrak, which tracks data at more than 70,000 stores globally. Bill Martin, co-founder of ShopperTrak, says it's still uncertain how stores will fare Friday.

In a fiercely competitive retailing climate, stores have been opening earlier into Thanksgiving. This year, it was clear that retailers pushed the best deals to Thanksgiving to get shoppers first before they run out of money. That could mean plenty of bargain hunters who wanted to keep Thanksgiving sacred will feel disappointed over the discount offerings on Friday.

With stores offering more deals earlier in the month, the holiday

weekend has become less important. But the period still sets the tone for the shopping season, whose sales are expected to rise 4.1 percent to \$611.9 billion. That would be the biggest increase since 2011.

Shoppers were out in full force on Thanksgiving.

There were 500 people in line by the time a Target store in New York City's East Harlem neighborhood opened at 6 p.m. on Thanksgiving. And 200 people rushed in at the Toys R Us in New York City's Times Square when it opened at 5 p.m. For Macy's 6 p.m. opening, there were more than 15,000 shoppers outside its New York flagship store, a little more than last year.

Brian Cornell, who became Target's CEO in August and

was at the East Harlem store on Thanksgiving, said shopping traditions have changed.

"It's been more of a week event," he told The Associated Press. After luring shoppers with big discounts on TVs, Razor scooters and other items, Target is hoping to lure back shoppers Friday with a 10 percent discount on gift cards, the first time it has cut gift card prices.

Cornell told The Associated Press that should help drive customers back into the store not only this weekend but throughout the holiday season.

Cornell said he does feel encouraged as shoppers were buying extra items like clothing and home furnishings.

"The baskets are full," he added.

Holiday gun buys test background check system

By MATT STROUD
The Associated Press

BRIDGEPORT, W.V. — The day after Thanksgiving is one of the busiest days of the year for gun purchases.

In the U.S., there are nine guns for every 10 people. Someone is killed with a firearm every 16 minutes. And every minute, gun shops make about 40 new requests for criminal background checks on people wanting weapons.

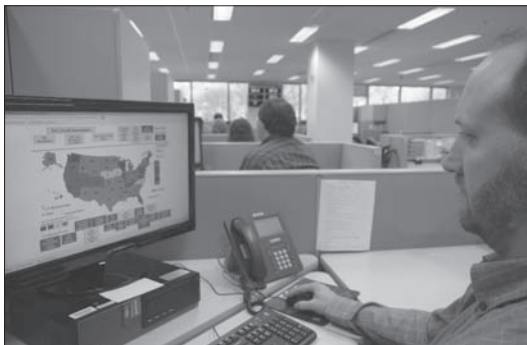
On the Friday after Thanksgiving — traditionally the first shopping day of the holiday season, the rush accelerates to nearly two checks per second, testing the limits of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

"We have a perfect storm coming," said Kimberly Del Greco, a manager in the FBI division that helps run the system, known as NICS.

Much of the responsibility for preventing criminals and the mentally ill from buying guns is shouldered by about 500 men and women who run the system from inside the FBI's criminal justice center, a gray office building with concrete walls and mirrored windows in West Virginia.

Granted a rare glimpse into the inner workings of the NICS, The Associated Press was able to see first-hand why 512 gun sales per day effectively beat the system last year.

By federal law, NICS researchers must race against the clock: They have until the



MATT STROUD/AP

A researcher simulates a check done for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System at the FBI's criminal justice center in Bridgeport, W.Va.

end of the third business day following an attempted firearm purchase to determine whether or not a buyer is eligible. After that, buyers can legally get their guns, whether or not the check was completed.

This clock ran out more than 186,000 times last year.

NICS did about 58,000 checks on a typical day last year. That surged to 145,000 on the Friday after Thanksgiving in 2013. They're bringing in 100 more workers than usual for the post-Thanksgiving rush this year.

The call centers have no access to privi-

leged information about buyers' backgrounds, and make no decisions. They just type in their names, addresses, birthdates, Social Security numbers and other information into the system. On Black Fridays, the work can be grueling: One woman took a call that lasted four hours when a dealer phoned in the maximum 99 checks.

In the years since these background checks were required, about 71 percent have found no red flags and produced instant approvals.

But ten factors can disqualify gun purchasers: a felony conviction, an arrest warrant, a documented drug problem or mental illness, undocumented immigration status, a dishonorable military discharge, a renunciation of U.S. citizenship, a restraining order, a history of domestic violence, or an indictment for any crime punishable by longer than one year of prison time.

Any sign that one of these factors could be in a buyer's background produces a red flag. FBI researchers then investigate, scouring state records in the federal database and calling state and local authorities for more information.

"It takes a lot of effort ... for an examiner to go out and look at court reports, look at judges' documents, try to find a final disposition so we can get back to a gun dealer on whether they can sell that gun or not," Del Greco said. "And we don't always get back to them."

NATION



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE LOWLINE/AP

This undated artist's rendering depicts a deep underground park that could be created in a 116-year-old abandoned trolley terminal below the Lower East Side of New York City.

Underground NYC park considered

By VERENA DOBNIK
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Visitors from around the world are drawn to New York City's High Line, an elevated park built on defunct railroad tracks transformed into an urban sanctuary of flowers, grasses and trees.

Private planners inspired by the High Line's success are now looking deep under Manhattan at a proposal to create the Lowline, billed as the world's first underground park.

The project would occupy a 116-year-old abandoned trolley terminal below the Lower East Side

that's been used for storage since 1948.

Street-level solar collectors would be used to filter the sun about 20 feet down to bedrock, turning the dank, subterranean space into a luminous, plant-filled oasis. The park would offer city residents a place of refuge and host art exhibits, music performances, readings and children's activities.

The Lowline is only one part of a Lower East Side revitalization project.

The neighborhood has an important place in the history of immigration. At the turn of the last century, newly arriving Italian,

Irish, and German families made their first homes in America in its tenements. So many Jewish families settled in the neighborhood that it has been called "the American-Jewish Plymouth Rock."

"Many people once fought to move out of the Lower East Side, and now, their grandkids are fighting to get in," said Mark Miller, an art gallery owner whose family ran businesses there since the late 19th century. "It's come full circle; it's hip, happening and historic."

The planners — New York residents who've worked or lived in the area — say they're not erasing the legacy of Orchard, Delancey and Rivington streets, once home to the likes of Irving Berlin, George Burns, Jimmy Cagney, Zero Mostel and Lucky Luciano.

"We're simply taking over a space no one was using in a densely populated neighborhood that lacks sufficient public space," said Dan Barasch, who specializes in promoting socially innovative applications of technology.

He co-founded the nonprofit Lowline project with architect James Ramsey, a former NASA engineer. The park is expected to cost about \$60 million in mostly private funds, plus some government money. More than \$1 million has been raised for research and design.



The abandoned trolley terminal that would be the site of the park lies deep underground.

Air pocket in snow helps save 2 NY boys

The Associated Press

NEWBURGH, N.Y. — Two boys trapped in a snow pile in the Hudson Valley for several hours after a plow buried them were able to survive thanks to an air pocket in the heavy, wet snow, New York police said Friday.

The two cousins — ages 11 and 9 — were building a snow fort Wednesday night near their apartment complex in Newburgh, N.Y., when a plow operator clearing a parking lot unknowingly pushed snow over them. A search was called that night after the boys' parents became alarmed.

The boys were found conscious and suffering from exposure at about 2 a.m. Thursday after an officer spotted a shovel and then a small boot in the snow.

Police said they were buried in about 5 feet of snow and had trouble moving their arms and legs.

"There must have been some sort of air bubble after the plow covered them up that let them breathe for so long," Newburgh police dispatcher Ben Corrado said Friday.

Residents, some digging by hand, helped in the early morning rescue.

"All I see was the feet. When I got over there, the little boy's feet was hanging out of the thing, and he was shaking, and his mother was like, 'It's all right, he's there, he's there. He was like, 'Mommy, mommy,'" Takaiya Stevens told WCBS-TV.

The boys were taken to a hospital, where one was held for observation.

Police did not identify the boys.

Newburgh, about 60 miles north of New York City, had received more than 6 inches of snow Wednesday.

Opportunities for immigrants depend on where they live

By BOB CHRISTIE
The Associated Press

PHOENIX — If Christian Avila lived a few hundred miles to the west, he would have a driver's license, qualify for in-state college tuition and a host of other opportunities available to young people granted legal status by President Barack Obama two years ago.

But Avila, 24, an immigrant who was brought here from Mexico by his parents at age 9, lives in Phoenix and still has to navigate the sprawling city in fear as he drives to school or work.

With last week's action by Obama that expanded the deferred action program and added millions of other immigrants, Avila's plight highlights a harsh reality about the president's changes. Obama may be allowing them to remain in the U.S., but it doesn't mean their state will let them drive a car, get an education at an affordable rate or obtain health insurance.

A patchwork of rules began to form in states — largely along political lines — after the president allowed some young immigrants to stay in the country. Conservative states like Nebraska and Arizona kept them from getting driver's licenses, while liberal locations were much more welcoming in terms of state services and

benefits.

Now, states must make new decisions on how to respond to the president's action that allows millions more immigrants to remain in the U.S.

In California, Democrats, immigration groups and health care advocates are pushing for the immigrants to receive health care under the state's version of the Medicaid program. The California Department of Health Care Services is deciding how to proceed.

A new gubernatorial administration in Arizona will have to decide whether to continue a hard-line approach toward state benefits that outgoing Gov. Jan Brewer took.

After Obama took action in 2012 granting legal status to 1.8 million young people brought to the U.S. as children, Brewer issued an executive order denying them driver's licenses or other state benefits, including in-state tuition at the state's public universities. A federal appeals court ruled the license ban was unconstitutional, and Brewer is considering an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"Our position is unilateral action by the president does nothing to change the fact that an illegal alien's presence in the United States is not authorized under federal law," Brewer spokesman Andrew Wilder said.



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NATION

ASEXUALS SEEK TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE

‘Invisible orientation’

By ELLEN MCCARTHY

The Washington Post

On a table in a Washington pizza place sat a toy birthday cake.

It was a symbol to newcomers looking for the Asexuals of the MidAtlantic Meetup that they had found the right group. Because after all, what's better than sex? Cake.

Six people in their 20s and 30s showed up that night. They talked about books and previous gatherings and what other members of the group were up to. And they talked about classic “ace moments.”

“Ace” is the nickname for asexuals — people who aren't sexually attracted to either gender, to anyone at all.

A pretty dark-haired woman who'd recently moved from Boston to Washington had just had an ace moment that week. Her new co-workers were asking about “her type” of guy.

“I'm not really that into people,” she responded.

And what she got in return, mostly, were blank stares.

It's the blank stares — and reactions that are sometimes much worse — that a growing number of asexuality awareness advocates are trying to reduce. They want people to know that sometimes boys like girls and girls like boys. Sometimes boys like boys and girls like girls. And sometimes some people don't like either — not in a sexual sense, anyway — and that is perfectly okay, too.

Roger Fox, one of three young men at the meetup in Washington's Chinatown neighborhood, has always known that he was different. He was bullied pretty badly as a kid in suburban Baltimore, in part because he was quiet and studious and half-Japanese. By high school, he'd learned to protect himself by going off on his own.

“I thought I was just socially different,” says Fox, now 31. “I didn't know it had anything to do with sex until I was old enough to where people were talking about it all the time. Then I was like, ‘Oooohh, that's why I'm different.’” Fox had no interest in sex at all.

Life got easier at the University of Maryland, where he found new groups of friends. Privately, he began to think of himself as “non-sexual.” A few times, girls expressed interest in him, but the physical intimacy thing always came up quickly, and the connections fizzled.

In 2008, he moved to Washington for an accounting job and began to look online for interesting Meetup groups that might allow him to establish a community. He went to a hiking meetup and one for German-language speakers. And then, fatefully, the startup website suggested that he might be interested in the asexuals meetup.

“I didn't know it was an actual thing that other people experienced,” he says. “For me at that moment, when I realized there were other people, it was really kind of a joyful moment.”

Like most people who discover the term asexual — and think that it applies to them — Fox soon discovered the Asexuality Visibility and Education Network.

David Jay, the de facto spokesperson for the asexuality community, founded AVEN as a freshman at Wesleyan University in 2001. “The first thing I felt, before I understood anything else about myself, was that there was this expectation of sexuality that was being put on me by society, and I knew



APRIL GREEN/For The Washington Post

Kate Eggleston, 25, of Falls Church, Va., knew that she was different by the end of elementary school. When she finally met other asexuals, “it was a relief,” she says.

it wasn't there,” he says. “Once I came to terms with who I was, I wanted to reach out and find other people like me. I didn't want other people to go through the same struggle.”

Within two months, AVEN's website had 100 members, many of whom e-mailed Jay to tell him their story. When he opened up a forum so members could talk to each other, personal tales began pouring in. Today, AVEN has almost 80,000 registered members.

The most commonly used figure to account for the number of asexuals in society comes from a 2004 British study of 18,000 people. One percent of respondents reported that they felt no sexual attraction to either men or women. That number may seem small, but 1 percent of the entire U.S. population is 3.16 million people.

And there are increased efforts at gaining societal acceptance. The fourth annual Asexuality Awareness Week took place last month. Campus groups are popping up all over the country, including Ace Space at the University of Maryland. And this fall saw the publication of “The Invisible Orientation: An Introduction to Asexuality,” by Julie Sondra Decker.

“I want it to get into sex ed and sexual counselors,” Decker, a writer and an asexual,

says of the book. “So that it will work into the common knowledge and common narrative about what sexuality is.”

That would have been a godsend for Kate Eggleston. “If somebody had told me at 15 that that was a normal thing — if we had just gone down the line [of possibilities] and said, ‘Also, there are some people who like nobody,’ I would've gone, ‘Boom! Done! That's a thing? I'm going to be that thing,” she recalls. “I think it would've saved me and a handful of other people a whole lot of frustration if I had known it was a valid choice.”

Eggleston, now 25, knew that she was different by the end of elementary school. “All the fifth- and sixth-grade girls kind of start on the, ‘Oh my God, who do you like? Who do you have a crush on?’” she says.

“I don't know the right answer to this,” she remembers thinking. “Um, no one? I just never had an answer.”

During high school in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia, she had a boyfriend, but mostly because he seemed to like her and that was what was expected of her. He was really just a buddy who liked the same books and video games that she did. But when he started getting interested in having sex, the relationship hit a dead

end.

Eggleston tried dating again in college, but the sex issue always got in the way. Finally she bowed to societal pressure and wound up in a sexual relationship with a boyfriend for six months.

“I'd never felt an inclination to, but the entire universe says that I should, so I'm going to try it,” she recalls. “And it sucked. It sucked. I hated it. I hated the whole thing. Not just the sex part, but the relationship, too. I wasn't good at it.”

Eggleston spent the rest of college single. But when she moved to Washington to work as an office coordinator at the Pentagon two years ago, she decided to give dating another shot. Quickly she met a man who seemed ideal. He was handsome and interesting and well-read and liked good music and was really into her.

They went on three dates. “I wasn't attracted to him because I don't feel attraction,” she says. “And that's when I called it. I was like, ‘I think I'm done with this for good.’ Because that was my best shot.”

She turned to the Internet for answers and found the AVEN Web site. “Honestly, it was a relief,” she says. “It was nice to have a word to assign to it other than ‘broken’ or ‘questioning’ or whatever it was.”

She told her friends, who were very accepting, and tried to explain it to her parents, though without using the word asexual.

“We've gotten to a place where I'm like, ‘Hey, I'm a 90-year-old cat lady!’” she says jokingly. “And I'm never getting married. Are you cool with that? My mom never asks, ‘So, are you dating?’ Because she knows I'm not.”

Her parents do worry about her being alone — last year she got a Taser for Christmas. “So right now I'm in the positive reinforcement stage. Like, ‘No, really, I'm happy. I'm happier than I've ever been before,’” she says. “Because I know what I'm about and I get it now.”

There is great variation within the asexual community and some, like Eggleston, are not interested in sex or relationships. Others, like Roger Fox, still hope to find a partner in life.

Fox's mom is also very interested in seeing that happen. “She gives me all sorts of examples of things where my parents will do something for each other and my mom will say, ‘See, only someone you're married to will do that for you,’” he says.

Perhaps because Fox is an only child, the spotlight on him is intensified. His hope is that he will find someone compatible and even have children one day, perhaps through adoption. That may happen through the events he attends and helps to organize within the asexual community or, he says, he may meet someone from the general population.

“I think it's really a spectrum,” he says. “It's not like you're a 0 or a 100 [in terms of sexual desire.] The idea is to find somebody close enough to you on the spectrum to be compatible.”

Fox knows that he has a greater dating challenge than the average guy, but he is focused primarily on making the most of life as it is. “I think the moment you start getting frustrated, you start getting desperate, and that's when bad things happen,” he says. “The key is, you have to be happy with your life as it is before you can be ready to welcome somebody else into it.”

NATION

For Crimeans, a complicated transition

8 months after Russian annexation, residents caught in complicated limbo

By MICHAEL BIRNBAUM

The Washington Post

SIMFEROPOL, Crimea — Eight months into the Russian annexation of the Black Sea resort region of Crimea, traces of Ukraine's 60-year rule here are rapidly being wiped away. Now Ukrainians themselves worry that they are next.

The Ukrainian language has vanished from school curriculums, Russia's two-headed eagle has been bolted onto government buildings, and Russian laws are slowly taking hold. And as the peninsula Russifies, Ukrainians and other minority groups are finding that an area once renowned for its easygoing cosmopolitanism is now stifling. Some are fleeing their native home.

Many complain that they have been written off both by the world and by Ukraine itself, which is focused on the bloody conflict in its southeast. The turmoil is a harsh consequence of the first major land grab in Europe since World War II — and it comes despite Kremlin assurances that life would be better in Crimea for Russians and Ukrainians alike.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has quickly become a haven for Ukrainian-speakers in Crimea, who can gather on Sunday mornings to pray and to send up prayers in sanctuaries whose authorities sit in Kiev, not Moscow. But Archbishop Kliment, the leader of the church here, fears for his future.

"I get up worried and I go to bed worried," he said, speaking in the converted school building in Simferopol that houses the church headquarters on this peninsula that's home to 2.4 million. "They are closing down Ukrainian schools, Ukrainian newspapers. It's all closed, and the Ukrainian church is the only thing left."

Archbishop Kliment finds himself a world away from the heady days he spent in Kiev in February, when he announced onstage to a crowd of battle-scarred protesters that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which broke away from Russian Orthodoxy after the fall



Alexander Burtsev, a pro-Russian and the head of a children's art school in Sevastopol, Crimea, looks at one of his students' paintings.

‘They are closing down Ukrainian schools, Ukrainian newspapers. It's all closed.’

Archbishop Kliment

leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Crimea

of the Soviet Union, had withdrawn its support for then-President Viktor Yanukovich. That provoked cheers from the crowd. Within days, Yanukovich was toppled — and Russia was moving in on Crimea.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said he was acting to defend the rights of ethnic Russians, although the risks they purportedly faced appeared to be almost exclusively voiced within broadcasts by state-run Russian media. President Obama called the Russian annexation “illegitimate.”

Many ethnic Russians were excited to join a richer nation that promised them a higher standard of living. In a March referendum, 97.6 percent were said to have voted to join Russia. Critics questioned the validity of the results, and opponents largely boycotted the voting. Now they say that an entire constellation of life is swiftly fading away.

Many Crimean residents, even those supportive of the Russian takeover, have found themselves

stuck in a strange hinterland between nations.

Ukrainian cellphone networks have pulled out, and suddenly friends and family in Ukraine are an expensive international phone call away. Businesses must follow new laws. Crimea's new Moscow-backed authorities shut down the branches of several Ukrainian banks, and the others departed, leaving many people's life savings in limbo.

Ukrainian authorities have been reluctant to unlock money for new Russian banks that they say are part of an illegal occupation. Tourism, once a mainstay of the economy, has lagged as international tourists stayed away this year. And agriculture suffered when Ukraine cut back the amount of water it sends to Crimea via a canal.

But many Crimeans are happy to be part of Russia, even if the initial euphoria has dissipated. Some welcome once again being part of a Russian nation to which they always felt connected. Others hold out hope for

new economic opportunities.

“We felt we had been in internal immigration. I am a Russian person,” said Alexander Burtsev, the director of a children's art school in Sevastopol, the port city that is home to Russia's Black Sea Fleet. “Our lives have become better,” he said. “Financially better and morally better, especially morally.”

Local authorities have promised him a new building for his art school, whose students learn painting and sculpture on rickety Soviet-era wooden stools.

Those who complain about the transition period, Burtsev said, are simply being impatient. “Times aren't easy, because we're switching from Ukraine to Russian legislation. But it's a temporary problem,” he said.

Authorities say they will smooth out the bumps that have accompanied the peninsula's switch to Russian rule. They say that there is room for minorities to live in Crimea so long as they live within Russian laws.

“Ukraine has been an angry stepmother for Crimea,” Crimean Prime Minister Sergei Aksyonov, the top Russian official in Crimea, said in written replies to questions. “To make Crimea self-sufficient is our strategic aim. We plan to reach this goal in five years,” and Moscow has pledged \$15.5 billion to help do so, he said.

Black Friday problems hit Britain's stores

LONDON — Americans celebrating Thanksgiving in Britain may have felt right at home as Black Friday shopping chaos caused some disruption.

The practice of offering bargain basement prices the day after Thanksgiving has spread across the Atlantic, with some retailers opening overnight to lure determined shoppers.

Police were called early Friday morning to help maintain security at some supermarkets and outlets that offered deep discounts starting at midnight.

Fights broke out at some stores and major websites stopped functioning because of too much traffic as shoppers sought online bargains.

There were problems in many parts of Britain, including Wales and Scotland.

Russian ships wait out storm in English Channel

MOSCOW — The Russian defense ministry says its warships have entered the English Channel to wait out a storm following a week of maneuvers in the North Sea.

The ministry said in a statement carried by Russian news agencies that a naval destroyer, a landing craft, a rescue tugboat and a tank ship had to anchor in the international waters of the Bay of the Seine, off France, on Friday. The ministry said the ships have been conducting naval exercises in the North Sea since Nov. 20.

Russia has conducted a variety of exercises following the Kremlin's annexation of Crimea and its involvement in eastern Ukraine.

Animals sacrificed in Nepal for good luck

KATMANDU, Nepal — Birds and other animals are being slaughtered in huge numbers at a festival in Nepal where devotees believe the sacrifices bring good luck and ward off evil.

Tens of thousands of animals are expected to be ritually killed during the two-day festival that began Friday in the fields near Gadhimal temple in the jungles of Bara district about 160 miles south of Kathmandu.

The Hindu festival is believed to be the world's largest animal sacrifice and is held each year though critics decry it as barbaric.

Volcano in Japan erupts, disrupting flights

TOKYO — A volcano in southern Japan blasted out chunks of magma Friday in the first such eruption in 22 years, causing flight cancellations and prompting warnings to stay away from its crater.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said that Mount Aso spewed out lava debris and smoke, shooting plumes of ash 3,280 feet into the sky. Dozens of flights from Kumamoto, the nearest city, were canceled.

The observatory did not expect the eruption to increase in scale. Mount Aso, about 625 miles southwest of Tokyo on Kyushu island, is one of the world's largest.

From The Associated Press

2 officers killed, 107 Islamists arrested in Egypt

The Associated Press

CAIRO — Two senior Egyptian army officers were killed early Friday morning as security forces arrested more than 100 Islamists ahead of planned anti-government demonstrations.

The officers were killed in separate shooting incidents by unidentified assailants in Cairo; two army conscripts were also injured. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media. Interior Ministry spokesman Hani Abdel-Latif said seven bombs were dismantled around the country.

The Islamists' call for nationwide rallies to topple the government and in defense of their religion is their first attempt in months to hold large protests in the face of an overwhelming crackdown since the military's ouster last year of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi.

Security forces, which earlier vowed to use “lethal force,” have responded with a massive lockdown since dawn. Armored vehicles deployed across the city while cement blocks sealed off roads leading to security headquarters, the presidential palace and the Ministry of Defense.

TV networks carried live footage of Egyptian Prime Minister Ibrahim Mahlab chairing an operations room inside the Cabinet to follow up on developments.

While previous demonstrations by Morsi supporters have played down their Islamist nature — focusing instead on opposing the coup against Morsi and restoring Egyptian democracy — the calls for Friday's protests have featured an overtly religious tone. The ultraconservative Salafi group organizing the rallies has warned of a war against Islam and urged protesters to raise Qurans in the air.

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OPINION

In wake of riots, change possible in Ferguson

By JENNY DURKAN

The Washington Post

Officer Darren Wilson will not face criminal charges for shooting and killing Michael Brown, according to the decision by a grand jury. It's a controversial ruling, one that seems almost certain to fracture that community and the country.

I know firsthand how difficult it is to prosecute police officers.

In 2010, I was the chief federal prosecutor in Seattle. That year, there were a number of high profile incidents involving use of force by Seattle Police officers. Many were caught on video (including one that showed a gang unit go yelling he was going to "kick the f---ing Mexican piss" out of a prone and unarmed suspect), and the images weren't pretty.

Things reached fever pitch when Seattle police officer Ian Birk shot and killed John T. Williams, an unarmed Native American woodcarver. Williams was walking on a downtown Seattle street, lost in hand. As he crossed the street in front of a police car, the officer got out of the car, pulled out a gun and ordered him to drop his knife.

Just seven seconds later, when Williams failed to comply, the officer shot him multiple times. Later, that officer testified he felt threatened.

Like the shooting of Michael Brown, this case went to local state authorities for review of possible criminal charges. In January 2011, a local inquest jury found that the officer was not in danger, and that Williams (who had hearing impairments) did not have adequate time to drop his knife.

But a majority of jurors also found that the officer did believe Williams was a threat. They made this seemingly contradictory ruling because the state sets a very high legal burden for prosecuting police. Under state law, the prosecutor must prove an officer acted with malice and without a good faith belief the shooting was justified. There was insufficient evidence to meet that standard, so the local state prosecutor determined state charges could not be brought.

Many in the community protested the decision and called on federal authorities to act.

My office joined the Justice Department Civil Rights Division to conduct two investigations: a criminal civil rights probe, and a separate broader look at whether the police



ST. LOUIS COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE/AP

A grand jury's decision not to indict Ferguson, Mo., police officer Darren Wilson, above, in the shooting death of Michael Brown sparked protests nationwide, triggering debates over the relations between black communities and law enforcement.

were systematically using force in an unconstitutional way. (This is happening right now in Ferguson, Mo., too.)

After looking at the facts, we concluded that we couldn't bring criminal civil rights charges. Federal law sets a very high bar, and essentially requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt that an officer intended to deprive a person of his civil rights. Evidence that an officer feared for his life or acted according to training could defeat such a case. It is exceedingly difficult to prove such specific motivation. On the one hand, this is OK — we want police to be able to make split-second decisions necessary to protect us. But we also want to ensure that deadly force is used only where necessary.

We spent a difficult day meeting with the victim's family, law enforcement and community groups to explain the decision.

But broad and enduring change was still possible. Even where individual criminal cases cannot be brought against an officer, a system that fosters unconstitutional policing can be corrected.

We reviewed voluminous documents and

data, conducted dozens of interviews and meetings with both community members and law enforcement. Eventually, our other investigation concluded the Seattle Police Department had a pattern of using unconstitutional force and that troubling evidence that it acted with racial bias.

Months of acrimony followed. We engaged police and political leaders, and consulted with national experts on all aspects of policing. This type of broad outreach is challenging but essential. Involving cops in the solution is particularly important.

Opposition was stiff at times. Political leaders were bitterly divided. Even after agreement was reached and a consent decree entered, pockets of resistance remained. But under threat of litigation, the city finally agreed to a broad consent decree entered in federal court. The order required wholesale changes in how and when police used force, how they were trained and how they will be held accountable.

The process of remaking the department began. Now, every aspect of reform must be reviewed and approved by the federal judge and his appointed monitor. This ensures independence, helps insulate the process from political and budgetary pressures, and increases public trust and confidence.

New policies and training on using force, dealing with mentally ill and biased policing were developed. A Community Police Commission, comprising a broad cross-section of community members and police officers, was created to oversee the changes and foster positive dialogue. The parties are in the process of agreeing to and measuring outcomes. One significant benefit already is that there is formalized collaboration with the mental health and crisis services, all dispatchers and officers have received training on crisis intervention and how to deal with people in crisis.

Today both the city and the department have new leaders who have embraced reforms. Years of work remain to implement the mental health and crisis services, but all parties — community, police, elected leaders and the Justice Department — are building the type of department the city needs and wants. These are the lasting changes that are possible in any city, including Ferguson.

Jenny Durkan was United States Attorney in Western Washington for five years, until November 2014. She served on Attorney General Holder's Advisory Committee and served on the Civil Rights Subcommittee.

America still a very different place for whites and blacks

By MAX EHRENFREUD

The Washington Post

As pressing on "Meet the Press," Rudy Giuliani asked why protesters upset about the white police officer's fatal shooting of a young black man in Ferguson, Mo., this summer don't pay more attention to violence blacks perpetrate against other blacks.

"White police officers wouldn't be there if you weren't killing each other," he said.

As mayor of New York City, Giuliani was instrumental in implementing and popularizing the "broken windows" theory of policing, which holds that if you should aggressively police even minor infractions to create an atmosphere of obedience to the law. This strategy, many critics feel, leads to distrust and violence between police and citizens.

As mayor, Giuliani faced in-

tense criticism from the black community in New York City over accusations of police bias against African-Americans, and he clashed sharply with black leaders repeatedly.

Nationwide, following the Ferguson shooting, a poll found that 80 percent of blacks thought that Brown's death raised important questions about race, while about half of whites said race was getting too much attention.

To understand why people see this case in such divergent ways, it's important to keep in mind that America is still a very different place for whites and blacks.

Blacks are much more like-

ly to be arrested than whites. In Ferguson, police are about three times more likely to arrest blacks than people of other races, according to an analysis by USA Today, which is more or less typical for the thousands of jurisdictions where the newspaper examined arrest records.

■ About one in four blacks have been convicted of a felony nationwide, compared to about 8 percent of the population as a whole. Among black men, in particular, the fraction is fully one third.

■ Unemployment among blacks is about twice the rate among whites.

■ Many whites live in diverse neighborhoods, but blacks are now twice as likely to live in segregated neighborhoods. An analysis of census data by The Washington Post found that about 28 percent of blacks live in neighborhoods where at least 85 percent of residents are also black.

We could debate the causes of these disparities at length. The important fact is that for whites, both economic opportunity and evidence of racial progress are abundant, and police are largely an unobtrusive, perhaps welcome symbol of security.

Many blacks, on the other hand, live in neighborhoods that haven't changed much in the past 40 years. They interact with law enforcement and the criminal justice system on a regular basis, and work is hard for them to find.

That's why whites are able to believe that discrimination is now rare but that bias against whites is now a greater problem than bias against blacks — a view that blacks do not share.

These numbers are also part of the reason that Brown's death is inspiring such passionate and irreconcilably different opinions on both sides.

OPINION

Game's sex, violence turn heads, stomachs

BY RORY APPLETON

Last year's immensely popular "Grand Theft Auto V" has returned with a souped-up version that is bound to have parents, politicians, critics and even some fans reaching for their pitchforks and gathering throughout the country.

The updated version hit the PS4 and Xbox One systems on Nov. 18. A PC version is set to release in January.

The latest incarnation of "Grand Theft Auto V" includes several enticing features to get people to buy the same game twice — including a first-person mode that was clearly the game's biggest draw.

This mode gives players an intimate, first-hand perspective when committing the thousands of murders, robberies and assaults required to progress through the game. First-person mode also gives players a front-row seat during simulated sex with prostitutes, reaching a drunken stupor at bars and tripping out on cocaine, which transforms the main characters into birds in a few scenes.

Perspective is a strange thing. Most of these acts aren't new features for the franchise. GTA players have always been in control of violent, hedonistic sociopaths.

But it has always been from a distant, third-person perspective. I wasn't the one killing these people, it was the protagonists — Michael, Trevor and Franklin. They were the crazy gods of this misguided cartoon world, and I was just watching it all happen.

With this new mode, that feeling is gone. I now feel as if I am the one blowing the convenience store clerk's head off. I am paying for a lap dance from a topless stripper. And I don't really like it.

The main issue of contention — at least in America, where violence is often an afterthought — is undoubtedly the sex scenes.

But it has always been from a distant, third-person perspective. I wasn't the one picking up prostitutes by honking their horns to get the woman's attention and driving her to a dark alley. The car would shake and players would hear muffled groans



Courtesy of Rockstar games

The video game "Grand Theft Auto V" originally allowed only a third-person view of the character's felonious activities. An updated version allows the player to see crime and sex from a first-person perspective.

for a few seconds. She would then exit the car, and the main character's bank account would lose money.

The latest version of "Grand Theft Auto V" now puts the player inside the car. You play the woman for one of several available sex acts, then you watch the act performed by your character from a first-person view. There is no nudity, and the player has no control during the sex act.

Technically, this is still an implied sex act. I never actually saw my character have intercourse — I only saw the prostitute get on top of him.

It is important to note that most of the sex acts in the game are triggered voluntarily — players don't have to pick up prostitutes.

As a 26-year-old, this doesn't bother me that much. I was more disturbed by the violence.

However, I was 13 years old when I first picked up a prostitute in 2001's "Grand Theft Auto III." I knew I was doing something my mother wouldn't approve of, but most people wouldn't consider that shaking-car scenario totally obscene.

Parents today have even less control over what games their kids play. If the child set up the console — and I find that many teen gamers set up every electronic device for their family — they may have already purchased and downloaded the game without anyone noticing using modern console's digital download features.

If you let your son or daughter use your credit card to set up anything on the console, there's a chance that the child is with a digital prostitute right now. And I understand how that could be troubling.

The strange thing is that I — like so many other gamers — viewed this first-

person mode as the major selling point of the game. It is without question what made me want to buy the game, and it is without question what turned my stomach about the game.

I'm not alone. Most video game critics are speaking out against the new feature, and quite a few of the avid gamers that frequent their websites agree with them, which I can tell you from personal experience is rare. Parent groups and the mainstream media are slowly learning of the new features and have started to light the beacons of typical video game outrage.

Strauss Zelnick, CEO of "Grand Theft Auto V" distributor Take-Two Interactive, defended the game's choices recently on Bloomberg Television's "Market Makers." During an interview, Zelnick said the game deals with gritty underworld themes and stands shoulder to shoulder with many popular movies and television shows — most of which show the same subject matter in exactly the same light.

Zelnick is right. The game is undoubtedly art and fits very neatly into the hyper-violent world of American media.

"Grand Theft Auto V" is also worthy of great praise for its many staggering achievements. It is a fantastic game.

But I can't help feeling queasy when I play it. I feel as if I am doing these horrible things — something not possible in a TV show or movie — and it puts a bad taste in my mouth.

What it may be time for the GTA team to take a step back and reflect.

Last year's version was one of the most successful games in history, so why take the graphic content even further for a release that was almost assuredly going to be a hit?

Developers are well within their legal rights to provide this type of gameplay, but to not decide that means they should. I was one of the gamers who wanted this first-person mode, but maybe the gaming community needs to be saved from itself from time to time.

Rory Appleton writes for The Fresno (Calif.) Bee.

Kurds feel alone in fight against Islamic State

BY JACKSON DIEHL

WASHINGTON — How goes the war against the Islamic State? A useful barometer is the position of Iraqi Kurdistan, which is the most reliable U.S. ally in the battle — and holds the longest front against the terrorists. Four months ago, two senior Kurdish officials traveled to Washington to deliver some dire warnings: The Islamic State was still expanding, no military force in the region could stop it and Kurdistan, itself, was no longer willing to be part of a shattered Iraq.

Last week, the Kurds, back in town for another round of lobbying, could cite some big changes. U.S. airstrikes beginning in August have opened the threat of an Islamic State offensive overrunning Kurdistan's capital, Irbil, and allowed the recapture of some key ground. Iraq has a new government with the Kurds' participation, and negotiations have begun in Baghdad on settling long-standing sectarian disputes.

Yet the bottom line, as the Kurds see it, is this: The Islamic State is still entrenched in a third of Iraq and Syria, still has the ability to carry out conventional military offensives and terrorist attacks and grows more dangerous the longer it keeps its

sanctuary. Worse, the prospect that it will be defeated by the U.S.-led coalition as it currently exists is slim.

"We have an international coalition, but the coalition is still in the sky," said Foad Hussein, chief of staff to Kurdistan President Massoud Barzani. "We need a coalition on the ground. On the ground, we Kurds are alone."

U.S. and Iraqi officials might call that hyperbole. Iraqi army forces are also fighting the Islamic State in western Iraq and reportedly managed to recapture the strategic Baiji oil refinery last week. Still, Baghdad's army remains weak and fragmented, with few reliable units. It is still flanked by independent, Iranian-sponsored Shiite militias not under the central government's control.

A plan to recruit and train Sunni tribesmen for a new national guard remains just that, Hussein pointed out. "This is a good idea," he said. "Maybe it will become a plan. But who is going to implement it? And how can you create a national guard on territory that is currently being held by (the Islamic State)?"

The big political change since the summer is the willingness of the Kurds to give Iraq's central government another chance, or at least to postpone open steps toward independence. In July, the Kurdistan administration insisted it would go forward

with a referendum on the territory's future and balked at U.S. pressure to participate in a new "unity government" in Baghdad. That was before the Islamic State's offensive against Kurdistan, the beginning of U.S. airstrikes and the Obama administration's success in forcing the departure of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

Now Hussein says, "We are part of this Iraqi government, and we hope it succeeds." He added, "We will never give up our right to self-determination. But our priority now is to destroy ISIS (the Islamic State)." The Kurds recently dispatched a delegation to Baghdad and struck a preliminary agreement with the new government of Haider al-Abadi on Kurdish oil deliveries to Baghdad in exchange for overdue budget payments.

Like the army, however, the reconstructed Iraqi central government exists mostly on paper. Festering issues concerning Kurdistan — including whether it will be allowed to export its own oil, whether it will retain control over the city of Kirkuk and on what terms its 150,000-member army will become part of an Iraqi national guard — remain unresolved. The Gulf between Abadi's Shiite party and Sunni leaders remains even wider.

In the end, the Kurds still see themselves as alone. The thrust of their lobbying in Washington was to obtain U.S. heavy

weapons for delivery to Irbil, with or without Baghdad's consent. The Pentagon's response was grudging: There is a plan in the works to deliver 250 armored vehicles to Iraq, of which the Kurds would get 25. The administration, meanwhile, plans to train nine Iraqi and three Kurdish brigades, in the hope that will be enough to go on the offensive in northern and western Iraq. But U.S. officials still insist that any arms deliveries to the Kurds go through the central government.

Like many U.S. military experts — including former Defense Secretary Robert Gates — the Kurds see that plan as underpowered. "Three divisions is 10,000 fighters," Hussein said. Mosul, the declared seat of the Islamic State's caliphate, is a city of more than 1 million people, heavily fortified with captured U.S. weapons. "Who is going to liberate Mosul?" Hussein asked. "We cannot do that without heavy weapons — Apache helicopters and Humvees, artillery, rockets, sniper rifles."

"To liberate Mosul, we need an army with us," said the Kurd. "Where is that army going to come from?" That's a question the Obama administration has yet to answer.

Diehl is deputy editorial page editor for The Washington Post.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Student led high school prostitution ring

FL VENICE — Authorities in Florida say a 17-year-old high school student organized a prostitution ring of students from nearby high schools.

The teen was arrested Friday on felony charges of human trafficking of a person younger than 18.

Police said at least one act of prostitution took place, which led to the arrest of John Michael Mosher, 21. He's accused of paying \$40 and a bottle of liquor to have sex with a 15-year-old girl.

Police Capt. Tom Mattmuller told the Sarasota Herald-Tribune another arrest is expected Tuesday.

Officials said the ring was uncovered when four students confided to administrators at Venice High School.

Documents indicate the teen and at least one other student concocted the plan over the summer to prostitute teens for money and alcohol.

Man arrested; deputies say he aimed banana

CO GRAND JUNCTION — A man is facing a felony menacing charge after two western Colorado sheriff's deputies say he pointed a banana at them and they thought it was a gun.

The Grand Junction Daily Sentinel reports 27-year-old Nathan Rolf Channing, of Fruitvale, was arrested Sunday.

According to an arrest affidavit, Mesa County deputies Joshua Bunch and Donald Love said they feared for their lives even though they saw that the object was yellow. Bunch wrote in the affidavit that he has seen handguns in many shapes and colors.

He wrote that Love was drawing his service weapon when Channing yelled, "It's a banana!"

The deputies say Channing told them he was doing a trial run for a planned YouTube video and he thought it would "lighten the holiday spirit."

Brawny brewers bare nearly all for charity

WI SHEBOYGAN — If hops make you hot, and you like your men like your beer — stout — these guys have just the thing for you.

A group of brawny, bearded brewers from the Sheboygan area has posed mostly nude for a calendar that is raising money for charity.

The 2015 Brew Men Calendar features 11 brewing professionals from 3 Sheeps Brewing, 8th Street Ale Haus and Plymouth Brewing Co. Proceeds from the calendar, which can be bought online or at various bars, grocers and liquor stores in Wisconsin and northern Illinois, will be donated to the November Foundation, a nonprofit organization focused on men's health issues, including prostate and testicular cancer.

Unsurprisingly, the idea came about when they were enjoying a few beers. After Kurt Jensen, owner of 8th Street Ale Haus, began talking to some of his

THE CENSUS

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The area (in square feet) of "tiny house" designed by Austin Community College in Texas that is now for sale. The students built the home as a demonstration of how to do more with less space. Bidding on eBay has started at \$37,800, though a buyer can end the auction by paying \$49,800. Part of the sale's proceeds will go to an endowment for environmentally friendly building technologies.



JOHN RUCOSKY, THE (JOHNSTOWN, PA.) TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT/AP

Frosty the Steelers fan

From left, Lucas DeArmitt, 10, his brother, Roger, 12, and Kaleb Yoder, 10, take advantage of a snow day to build snowmen Wednesday in Jerome, Pa.

brewing buddies about doing charity work, the group of beer-lovers eventually came up with something similar to a swimsuit calendar.

2 on joy ride rescued after boat runs aground

RI CHARLESTOWN — Authorities say two men were rescued and taken into custody by Rhode Island environmental police after a boat they took for a Thanksgiving joy ride ran aground.

Charlestown police were contacted by the Coast Guard for a vessel in distress in the Charlestown Breachway early Thursday. Charlestown Rescue marine units found a 22-foot sport fishing boat that had run aground in Charlestown Pond. It had lost its hydraulic system and steering.

The men were uninjured but had mild hypothermia because they had been out since about 3 a.m.

Authorities learned the boat was taken without the consent of owner Robert Dickau of South Glastonbury, Conn. Rescue personnel said the men were out for a joy ride.

Environmental police couldn't immediately be reached about any pending charges. The men weren't identified.

Los Angeles freeway sign unveiled with typo

CA LOS ANGELES — No one noticed the mistake until the morning after the sign was installed above Interstate 710 in Southern California.

A subcontractor had misspelled Olympic Boulevard with an "I" in place of the "Y."

The large, green exit sign was covered with a tarp and eventually removed, but not before drivers snapped and tweeted photographs of the mega-typo earlier this month.

Caltrans spokeswoman Kelly Markham said that the subcontractor will pay for a new sign.

Pair arrested for drugs after headband theft

SD RAPID CITY — Two Rapid City residents pulled over by police for suspicion of stealing a couple of headbands were caught with drugs in their car during the arrest.

Wanda Fields-Brouse, 37, of Rapid City, and Coy Reinhard, 32, of Fort Pierre, were arrested after leaving a sporting goods store.

The officer who pulled them over noticed the headbands and the drugs, including methamphetamine, in the car.

Fields-Brouse is charged with ingestion of a controlled substance, possession, open container, marijuana possession, theft and an outstanding warrant. Reinhard was arrested for ingestion of a controlled substance, possession, open container, marijuana possession, possession of drug paraphernalia and theft.

Flying tire kills woman as she walks along road

GA ATLANTA — Police say a woman was struck by a flying tire and killed as she walked along an Atlanta street.

Atlanta police Sgt. Greg Lyon said the right front tire of a Chevy Suburban came off and struck the woman Wednesday afternoon as she walked along Metropolitan Parkway in southwest Atlanta. Lyon said the tire from the southbound vehicle first went

into the right lane, then hit a curb and went airborne and struck the woman in her upper back. Investigators don't believe the woman saw the tire before she was hit.

Lyon said no criminal charges are expected.

Auction fetches \$28K for 1st bourbon batch

KY LOUISVILLE — One of Kentucky's newest whiskey makers is making a big splash, fetching more than \$28,000 for its first bottle of bourbon.

The bottle appeared to rank among the most expensive bottles of bourbon ever sold. Eric Gregory, president of the Kentucky Distillers' Association, said he doesn't know of any other bottle that sold for that amount or higher. All of the money will go to a local charity.

Boundary Oak Distillery says the winning bidder is from Kentucky but asked to remain anonymous. Whoever it is will have to be patient.

Boundary Oak plans to fill its first bourbon barrel in December, and the whiskey will age for two years before bottling.

From wire reports

LIFESTYLE

By SAM McMANIS
The Sacramento Bee

Another gorgeous and sunny fall southern California afternoon — the smog, apparently, is taking the weekend off — and here I am in a traffic jam deep in the industrial heart of the San Gabriel Valley.

To my left on Azusa Canyon Road is a huge gravel pit, a moonscape-like crater covering at least three square blocks. To my right is the boxy, beige concrete facade of one of Irwindale's largest and most controversial businesses, Huy Fong Foods, where this conga line of cars is trying to squeeze into the company parking lot built to accommodate only about a hundred vehicles. Men in reflective vests wave orange flags semaphorically as drivers jockey to get a coveted spot, park and then briskly walk to the ever-expanding line at the entrance, as if rushing the stage at a rock concert.

As I inch along, I stare into the gaping maw of the pit and think, I'm giving up my Saturday for this? I'm heading to an outpost in L.A.'s vast sprawl east of downtown, an area people usually flee from on the weekend, to check out a condiment? I'm going to don a hairnet with other visitors and watch factory workers grind chilies, mix them with sugar, salt, garlic, distilled vinegar, potassium sorbate, sodium bisulfite and xanthan gum? I'm going to pour adoration on a humble sauce that scores of diners squirt on, well, anything that needs a bit of spicing up?

Yes, reader, I am. And, by the end of the day, so will have 2,400 other people.

Such is the mass appeal of Sriracha, fast becoming the unofficial king of condiments. Ketchup and mustard, salsa and soy sauce? Sorry. They are but bland also-rans to the fiery Asian concoction that, in the past two years, has spawned fan clubs and loyal followers, jumped from a monocultural dinner table staple to finding its way onto the menus of Subway, Taco Bell, even Applebee's. Heck, Sriracha is so all-American that you can now buy it at Wal-Mart. It's truly a crossover hit.

But it's not just the four-alarm, nasal-scouring sensual nature of the sauce that has made Sriracha the Beyoncé of condiments — hot, full-bodied and irresistible. Controversy, too, has boosted its public profile, elevating Sriracha from the food section to the front page.

Last spring, the Irwindale City Council filed a lawsuit and public nuisance declaration against Huy Fong Foods, maker of the sauce, after nearly 70 residents in the community of 1,400 complained that the odors emanating from the factory burned their eyes and throats, as if grinding chilies were akin to brewing toxic waste. Public hearings were held, protests staged by the pro-Sriracha faction, officials from the South Coast Air Quality Management District consulted, and even Gov. Jerry Brown's



PHOTOS BY SAM McMANIS, THE SACRAMENTO BEE/TNS

More than 2,000 visitors a day took the free Sriracha sauce-making tour during fall grinding season at Huy Fong Foods in Irwindale, Calif., where they could pose with a cardboard cutout of company CEO David Tran.

Looking for some HOT STUFF?

Californian Sriracha factory
a spicy place to be during
grinding season in the fall



Above: A visitor to the Sriracha factory points his smartphone to capture the chili-grinding magic.

Right: The chilies are ground with garlic into a smooth paste before being packaged in squeeze bottles.

Business and Economic Development Office weighed in as Texas Gov. Rick Perry tried to lure Huy Fong to his state.

By the summer, Irwindale finally woke up and smelled the Sriracha and realized what a good thing it had, dropped the lawsuit and deemed the factory a public nuisance no longer.

In response, Huy Fong's CEO, Vietnamese immigrant David Tran, made the savvy PR move to fling open the factory doors to free public tours during the three-month grinding season, running mid-August to late October. Which is why, on the last Saturday of October, scores of Sriracha supporters flocked to the manufacturing plant for a look-see. Rumor had it, too, that free samples might be included. And, if there's anything better than Sriracha, it's free Sriracha.

"It's the mystique of it that brings me here," said Veronica Hahni of nearby Monrovia. She'd come with sisters Christina and Tanya, Sriracha fans all. "It's been closed off for so long, and you heard so much about the people complaining, now they're letting people in to see behind the curtain. We had to come."

Before I made the trip to the grinding machine, where the eau de chili is said to be strongest, I stopped three visitors on their way out. They breathed in the fumes — enticing to many; noxious to some — and dismissed the complaints out of hand.

"It wasn't as bad as we expected," said Justin Hsu of Irvine. "They give you the tissue to cover your face, I guess, but you don't need it."

Camera-toting Sriracha tourists who filed into the grinding area with me were hardly overcome by wafting essence of chili. As I joined a family, leaning over the vat that takes the chilies dumped off trucks and transports them via conveyor belt to the grinder, I almost dropped my smartphone in the mix. When a worker, John Acuna, helped steady me, I noticed his eyes were a little watery.

"It's OK," he said. "It took me two weeks working here to get used to it. My first day, man, it was intense. My nose was running and eyes watering. Now, it's, like, no problem."

Only two or three of the hundred visitors I encountered opted to wear surgical masks, and many didn't even put to use the tissues workers handed out. Most were so enthralled with capturing, for their social media uses, the image of barrel upon barrel of Sriracha lined up along the factory floor, the processing of the savory elixir into the clear plastic bottles with green caps, and the packing into boxes to make way for public consumption.

After the tour, visitors flocked to the gift shop, where they snapped up T-shirts with provocative slogans playing off the spiciness of the sauce and the preening rooster. (A tame example: "This is why I'm hot.")

Out front, one of Huy Fong's top executives, operations manager Donna Lam, greeted visitors as they emerged from the experience and pointed them toward free Sriracha ice cream, Sriracha popcorn and chocolate, a complimentary T-shirt commemorating the company's 34 years, and a free bottle of sauce.

"David (Tran, the CEO) did this so people could see for themselves how sanitary we are and what the operation is like and to show we are not making toxic odor," said Lam, who added the company will likely resume tours next fall during grinding season.

"There was talk that it was making people nauseous and giving them bloody noses. You saw that's not the case."

"The thing is, we do make hot sauce. You drive by Starbucks, you're going to smell them making coffee. But the issue is, is it enough to make people ill? No."

HEALTH & FITNESS

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS/THIS

Don't get left in the dark

Safety tips for night hikes

By HARRY JACKSON JR.
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Cold fall and winter night hikes heighten your senses, offer fewer bugs, a wider field of vision with bare bushes and trees, less light pollution for stargazing and a special sort of quiet.

Hiking at night holds its own brand of fun, but safety is the first priority. This is a primer for folks looking for a new adventure.

Select a trail

- **Start small:** Night hiking can be an unexpectedly intense. Short, paved trails are ideal for beginners. Getting lost is unlikely, and you'll encounter fewer obstacles. Ease into the longer, complicated trails as you get more experience.

- **Walk a familiar trail:** Walk a trail during the day before trying it at night. The landscape looks different at night, as do landmarks and obstacles. Pay special attention to forks and crossroads.

- **Check the rules:** State parks are more likely to allow night visitors; some allow overnight stays. Conservation areas and municipal parks usually close at sundown.

Gear

- **Plan for cold and rain:** Be ready for surprises, though. Dress for the weather. Layer clothing. Carry a pocket poncho, which also serves as ground cover for sitting. They're as cheap as \$5 or expensive as a couple of hundred dollars.

- **A belt pack or small backpack:** You can throw in an extra sweater, paper towels, extra water, snacks. Don't overload it.



- **Light:** Headlamps that strap on hats are best for winter. Flashlights come as big and bright as you can carry. Ask store experts about night-vision filters for your lights. Carry extra batteries and a small, backup flashlight.

- **Cellphone:** Know emergency numbers for park rangers. Make sure someone knows your whereabouts. Set hourly or regular check-in times.

- **A whistle:** In case rescuers need helping finding you. Even small whistles are loud in a forest.

- **GPS and map:** A global positioning system and a map can help in case you need to call for help. Most cellphones have GPS. You'll appreciate it if you're injured.

- **Walking stick:** A stick can find holes and obstacles hidden in shadows and help feel the ground during an off-trail bathroom break.

- **Regular gear:** Bring water, a snack, a compass, reflective tape for walking on roads and anything you'd carry during the day.

- **Pack the pooch:** Even small dogs alert you to critters or other hazards. Use the shorter leash.

Things to avoid

- **Don't be afraid:** You'll encounter spooky forms and sounds. An owl might burst from a limb, a doe might bolt from a bush. You might see eyes glowing in the dis-

tance. But that's half the fun.

- **Don't play night jokes:** Someone could get hurt.

- **Don't play with animals:** Public camping grounds and trash dumps help critters lose some of their fear of humans. They'll bite a finger that smells like food. Dogs scare them away.

- **Consider the age of children:** The Missouri Department of Conservation, for instance, often has 10-year-old minimum age for night hikes.

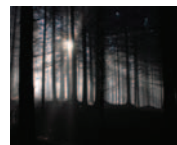
Safety tips

- **Walk with friends:** There's safety in numbers.
- **Walk slowly:** The ground has long shadows and higher contrasts that can hide obstacles.

- **Walk quietly:** Forest night noises are different; there's no city noise.

- **Practice light courtesy:** If you encounter other hikers, shine lights on the ground so the glow illuminates your space. Don't shine your light on houses that you pass.

- **Lost? Stay put:** If you have to call for help, don't wander.



LIFESTYLE



PHOTOS BY ANGELA PETERSON, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL/TNS

Shafia Monroe demonstrates how to wrap 3-month-old Muntasir Mahdi in fabric during a doula workshop in Milwaukee. Monroe is the founder of the International Center for Traditional Childbearing in Portland, Ore.

Doulas offer a range of services to mothers through pregnancy and postpartum, from education and emotional support to attending doctor visits and accompanying them through the birth.

Mother's helper

Doula training targets infant mortality among blacks

BY ANNYSA JOHNSON
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Tyanna McLaurin bends down and with a little help hoists 3-month-old Muntasir Mahdi onto her back.

She wraps a bright cloth around him and, with a few twists and tucks, secures him in place — as she saw countless women do in her years in the Peace Corps in Ghana.

"Babies carried on their mothers' backs never cry; they hear the mother's heartbeat," Shafia Monroe tells the women gathered at the Body and Soul Healing Arts Center in Milwaukee.

"Look at that," Monroe says as McLaurin stands upright with the child. "That's a happy baby."

Monroe is leading a first-of-its-kind training in Wisconsin aimed at reducing infant and maternal mortality by encouraging women of color to become doulas, or birthing companions, and midwives.

The four-day program, offered by the Portland, Ore.-based International Center for Traditional Childbearing, draws on the centuries-old traditions of African and African-American midwives.

"When they eradicated the black midwife in the South, for various reasons, we lost that pillar in our community that kept us connected to our traditions and our spirituality," said Monroe, the center's founder and a certified midwife.

"We're just re-empowering women to know what they've always known," she said. "We're working to bring back the wisdom of that legacy."

Doulas, depending on their practice, offer a range of services to mothers through pregnancy and postpartum, from education and emotional support to attending doctor visits and accompanying them through the birth.

They are not midwives, who are licensed clinicians. But many who take Monroe's course go on to seek that additional training.

Research suggests that employing doulas positively affects birth outcomes for mothers and infants, according to Katy Kozhimannil, an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health who has studied their use.

"There is ... unequivocal evidence that having a doula or continuous support during labor is associated with better

outcomes — with lower rates of C-sections, epidural use and episiotomies, higher rates of spontaneous labor, and higher Apgar scores — and there are really no drawbacks," she said.

However, low-income and minority women, who have the highest rates of infant and maternal mortality, often face barriers to access, including cost and the availability of providers who can relate to their cultural experience.

In Wisconsin, for example, there are only two certified African-American doulas, and one woman of color in the Wisconsin Guild of Midwives.

The guild is sponsoring the training, which costs \$800 a person, with financial support from the March of Dimes and several other organizations and individuals. Most of the women have received a scholarship.

"There is an unbelievable disparity in birth outcomes between black and white communities, and this is not OK," said Guild President Marijke van Roojen, a licensed and certified midwife in Appleton, Wis.

In June, for example, the City of Milwaukee issued a report showing that black babies in the city had three times the mortality rate of white babies.

At least two states, Oregon and Minnesota, have recognized the potential for cost savings and allow Medicaid reimbursement for the use of a doula.

Monroe's program, which is just a first step in the process of doula certification, emphasizes breast-feeding, nutritional education and early and consistent neonatal care.

She walks students through the five main causes of infant mortality: genetic defects, prematurity, low birth weight, sudden infant death syndrome and accidents. But Monroe adds another: systemic racism, a view that is gaining traction among researchers.

Anxieties brought on by poverty, lack of education and opportunity, and proximity to violence "puts stress on all the organs, including the placenta," causing some babies to be born too early, she said.

The course is a mix of intensive study and hands-on experiences, much of it aimed at building connections and "sisterhood" among participants.

On a recent Saturday, the women made herbal teas and natural remedies and balms for such ailments as back pain and insomnia with Healing Arts founder and Alice's Garden director Venice Williams.

Later in the day, they practiced wrapping babies on their



Monroe demonstrates how to do an African headwrap.

backs, and a slow, tandem dance aimed at getting laboring mothers to relax and breathe and push.

"Keep breathing, it's the most important part, the most important part," they sang and laughed in pairs tethered to each other by scarves. "You push, and then you sigh. You push, and then you sigh."

The weekend's participants, most of them women of color, came from across the state and Illinois for the training. They represented a range of educational backgrounds and experiences. Some have children; some don't. Some work in health care, and some have birthed children with the help of a doula or midwife.

For Tamara Thompson-Moore of the Town of Windsor, Wis., it was the most beautiful of her five experiences in childbirth.

"It was not a medical crisis," she said. "It was the most romantic birth I could have had."

"It was just a lot more peaceful, relaxed," said Sahar Mahdi of Milwaukee, who has a nursing degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and gave birth to two of her three sons with midwives. "The body could just do what it was intended to do."

Like all of the women here, she wants to make sure others — especially low-income and minority women — have that same option.

"I want to empower them so they can make decisions for themselves," said Mahdi, who is studying to become a midwife at the Authentic Birth Center in Wauwatosa, Wis.

"I love working with women. I love life. I just want others to have that same positive experience."

VIDEO GAMES



A BEAUTIFUL BUT IMPERFECT WORLD

Technical glitches mar 'Unity's' intriguing tale

BY BRIAN BOWERS/Stars and Stripes

If Charles Dickens reviewed video games, he might say that it was the best of Creeds, it was the worst of Creeds. "Assassin's Creed: Unity" offers depictions of 18th-century Paris and its inhabitants that are absolutely spectacular. And while the story doesn't exactly rival Dickens' tale of the French Revolution, it's pretty good — especially by "Assassin's Creed" standards.

However, some of the controls are a bit soft and sloppy — a serious problem when you're playing a game about people known for precise execution. In addition, the game abounds in minor visual and performance glitches.

"Unity" is the latest installment of Ubisoft's saga about the struggle between the freedom-loving Assassins and order-minded Templars. You play as Arno Dorian, an Assassin caught in a tangled web of love and conflicting loyalties. The story is more tightly focused on Arno than on any previous hero in the franchise, which makes the portrayal more intimate and interesting.

Arno's tale unfolds amid the chaos of the revolution that overthrew the French monarchy and led to the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. The narrative is driven by Arno's personal quest and the Templar-Assassin feud, but much of the action involves personalities and events at the center of the revolution. During missions in the main storyline, you will meet a lecherous Marquis de Sade, an ambitious Napoleon and a ruthless Robespierre. In side quests, you perform tasks such as gathering the heads of guillotined noblemen so Madame Tussaud can make wax likenesses. The



streets are often filled with protesting mobs and the politically active fear losing their heads to the Reign of Terror. As a result, Arno's Paris is the most dynamic setting in the franchise's history.

Aside from a few excursions to Versailles, the action takes place in the sprawling city of Paris. You are able to scale the walls and scamper across the rooftops of the city's most famous buildings, from the cathedral of Notre Dame to the dreaded Bastille prison. All are rendered in stunning detail.

And this time around, you don't have to be content with climbing the exteriors. You can enter countless buildings great and small. I have to admit that I enjoyed strolling through the palace rooms and comparing them to my memories of Paris. At other times, I was thrilled with the many new opportunities for attack and escape that these open doors provided. While taking in the scenery is part of the fun of "Assassin's Creed," the game is really about the action.

Ubisoft has revised some of the parkour controls. It's a little easier to scamper up a palace wall, and it's much easier to climb back down. However, it also seems that the new mechanics are a bit loose. When leaping from railing to overhang to roof,

Arno is likely to go off course and land on the wrong item at some point. And it's relatively difficult to swing through an open window on the first try. In many cases, this isn't a big deal, but it can be disastrous if you have a bloodthirsty Templar on your tail.

I also experienced a number of performance glitches, such as getting stuck in a wall, falling through the floor and having an apparently dead enemy come back to life. The worst was during a cooperative mission in which the final goal never appeared on the map, rendering the entire event a bust.

Visual glitches are even more frequent. I saw my share of dancing corpses and characters melding into the scenery, though I never saw some of the more bizarre glitches that populated YouTube in the days just after the game's release.

When taken together, these minor problems make the game feel like it wasn't quite finished.

However, developers also made some welcome changes in the game's format.

One of the biggest changes comes in the online multiplayer mode's switch from competitive to cooperative play. In some of the previous games, players stalked each other in what was basically a deadly game of tag. This time around, you can team up with one or more players to help Arno win control of Paris for the Assassins. Players are given a common mission that can only be accomplished after completing several intermediate goals. While this sounds like a great opportunity to engage in a well-coordinated multi-pronged assault involving stealth and precision, the reality is that most of the players jump right into combat and kill every enemy on the map. This doesn't seem like the most stylish way to accomplish the mission, but it can be fun and effective.

Another change is the virtual elimination of the modern-day elements that plagued previous "Assassin's Creed" games. As in the past, you actually play the role of a 21st-century person who is using advanced technology to step into the genetic memories of a long-dead Assassin. Unlike previous

games, there is no secondary story based on that modern-day person's activities. I am thrilled with this change because I found those stories distracting and a bit weird.

The modern-day elements pop up only a few times during the game, mostly to remind you that your ultimate goal is to find a mysterious Templar whose DNA contains a desirable genetic code. On three occasions, modern-day Templars try to follow your digital trail through Paris. This leads to three interesting escape missions that propel you into incarnations of Paris in different eras — including one where you have to scale the Eiffel Tower and shoot at Nazi warplanes. These missions also set the stage for a series of side quests that involve rescuing other Assassin agents who have been trapped in these alternate Parises.

It should probably be noted that "Unity" has drawn criticism because of its unflattering portrayal of some of the revolution's personalities and because of its lack of female avatars in the multiplayer mode. And I have to admit that I was pretty irritated by Arno's assertive atheistic monologue in the closing scene. Ubisoft precedes each "Assassin's Creed" with a

Overall grade: **B-**

notice that the game was developed by a team representing many cultures and faiths, presumably indicating that it approaches its subjects with sensitivity. However, that notice rings a bit hollow at this point.

"Unity" had tremendously large shoes to fill after last year's rollicking pirate adventure, "Assassin's Creed IV: The Black Flag." It had no chance of beating that game in terms of sheer fun and excitement, and it didn't really try. Instead, developers opted for a more tightly focused story and breathtaking representation of Paris. And there is plenty of fun to be found there.

Bottom line: "Assassin's Creed: Unity" offers an intriguing adventure and a breathtaking setting but is plagued by glitches.

Rating: Mature, primarily for violence and blood

Platforms: Xbox One, PlayStation 4,

WiiU, PC

Online: assassinscreed.ubi.com

"Assassin's Creed: Unity" introduces a revamped combat, parkour and stealth system.

Photos courtesy of Ubisoft



BOOKS

Award-winning words of war

'Redeployment' chronicles experiences of Iraq War troops

BY JENNIFER HLAD
Stars and Stripes

Phil Klay was so sure he wasn't going to win the National Book Award for fiction that he didn't even prepare a just-in-case speech until the morning of the award ceremony, when his wife told him he had to write something.

Nearly a week after his name was announced at the swank dinner in New York City for "Redeployment," the 31-year-old Marine Corps veteran was still having a hard time believing he had won.

"It's a pretty wild thing," he said, laughing. "I'm still kind of amazed. ... I don't even know how to describe it."

Klay, who was also recognized by the National Book Foundation as one of "5 Under 35" authors, was a writer before he joined the Marine Corps and might have guessed he would write something about the military, but hadn't planned to write a book about Iraq.

Then, in 2007, he deployed to Al-Taqaddum Air Base for 13 months as the public affairs officer for the 2nd Marine Logistics Group.

"I went to Iraq, and then I came back. And then, of course. Of course that's what I wrote about," he said. "That was the thing that I was trying to make sense of. What was that?"

"And not just 'what was that' for me, but 'what was that' for the people in my life."

But instead of a memoir, then-1st Lt. Klay began writing a short story from the perspective of a Marine infantry sergeant who has just returned home to North Carolina from Iraq.

After he left the Marine Corps in 2009, he began graduate school at Hunter College in New York and wrote other stories, told by other narrators: A chaplain. An artilleryman. A foreign service officer.

"For me, fiction is the best way that I know to write about this kind of stuff," Klay said. "If I was writing from my own perspective it would be my reflection on things that have happened to me. And I

like good memoirs, but ... I wanted to have a lot of different perspectives about the war, a lot of different experiences, a lot of disagreements about what the war was, what it might be."

It took more than four years to write the book, Klay said, and he worked hard to get the details right: interviewing other veterans, asking lots of questions, and finding people from other jobs and military occupational specialties to read drafts.

The feedback from veterans has been mainly positive, he said; for the most part, people were happy to see someone trying to tell the story from different perspectives, and to bridge the disconnect between veterans and civilians.

"We're a country that goes to war, and if we're going to be good citizens, all of us, veterans and civilians alike, we should be able to talk about what the experience of war means, so we know what the hell we're voting for, what we're doing as a country," he said.

The hope Klay said he had with the book was to invite veterans and civilians "into the skulls of other narrators and really think about what those people, what their story was and what it might mean."

In his award acceptance speech, Klay said he had returned from Iraq "not knowing what to think about so many things."

"What do you make of it when the middle school students you're teaching ask you if you've killed anyone, and are horribly disappointed when you say no? When strangers at a bar insist on treating you as though you must be psychologically damaged, just because you're a vet?" he said. "I don't actually have the answers to those questions, but the book was the only way that I knew to really start thinking them through."

Writing is a way of starting a conversation, he said, and he "can't think of a more important conversation to be having. War's too strange to be processed alone."

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ROBIN PLATZER, NATIONAL BOOK FOUNDATION/AP

Iraq War vet Phil Klay is the recipient of the 2014 National Book Award for fiction for "Redeployment," a collection of short stories.

Shane Harris' '@War' details rising military-Internet link

BY TONY PERRY
Los Angeles Times

A thought commonly attributed to George Orwell holds that good people can sleep at night only because rough men are awake and ready to protect them. But in the modern world, two other groups are also vital to a sound sleep: software engineers and computer geeks.

That's the scary but well-documented thesis of "@War: The Rise of the Military-Internet Complex" by Shane Harris, a deep dive into the world of cyberwar and cyberwarriors. The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks involved planes crashing into buildings; the next could be a surprise shutdown of computer systems that control the U.S. economy and government and much of its military capability.

"There is no concept of deterrence today in cyberspace," a former hacker turned security executive tells Harris. "It's a global free fire zone."

The U.S. military and intelligence community, Harris reports, were slow to join the cyberarms race but are now mulling up apace, only modestly slowed by the revelations by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden about domestic intelligence gathering that smacked of Big Brother.

Harris is even-handed in his references to Snowden, seeing him as neither whistle-blowing hero nor treasonous narcissist. "It turned out that the NSA, which wanted to

protect computers from Wall Street to the water company, couldn't keep a twenty-nine year-old contractor from making off with the blueprints to its global surveillance system."

Harris, a fellow at the New America



Foundation, knows his stuff: the people, the agencies, and the dizzying array of acronyms and clever mission names like Starburst, Buckshot Yankee, TAO (Tailored Access Operations) and ROC (Remote Operations Center).

His reporting is thorough and his narrative is smooth in conveying that nearly everybody is spying on and hacking everybody else.

The U.S. hacked the president of Mexico to determine if he was a dupe of the drug cartels. The Chinese slipped a bug into the laptop of the U.S. secretary of Commerce during a trip to Beijing. The email of then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates was hacked.

Chinese hacking is aimed not just at the U.S. military but also military contractors,

including those working on the newest U.S. warplane, the Joint Strike Fighter, Harris reports. "Cyber espionage and warfare are just the latest examples in a long and, for the Chinese, proud tradition."

To thwart the Chinese, and other nation-state and rogue adversaries, the U.S. is updating an old strategy: a partnership between government and industry.

Army Gen. Keith Alexander, NSA director and also commander of the U.S. Cyber Command, went to the 2012 Def Con conference in Las Vegas, "dressed in blue jeans and a black T-shirt, shedding his army uniform for an outfit more palatable to his audience of hackers and security researchers."

The speech went well, but the next year, after the Snowden revelations, Alexander's invitation for a return engagement was rescinded. Instead, the spymaster went to a rival conference, called Black Hat. He was booed and heckled and tried gamely to fight back. "We stand for freedom!"

Harris sketches the evolution of the White House attitude toward cyberwar.

As the book asserts, then-President George W. Bush authorized a computer worm called Stuxnet to frustrate and degrade the Iranian nuclear program but not inflict enough damage to alert the Iranians to the covert attack. President Barack Obama ordered Stuxnet enhanced so that about 1,000 centrifuges were destroyed by being forced to spin at dangerous speeds. While that might have slowed the Iranians'

program by two years, "@War" argues that it also alerted them to the hacking and limited the intelligence-gathering capability.

Obama also approved only the most modest changes in NSA snooping after the Snowden disclosures, Harris says.

Given the seriousness of the topic, "@War" is not a book with a lot of laughs. But there is some grim mirth in watching a midlevel Army officer puncture the arrogance of defense industry executives who felt their computer systems were secure from hacking.

Then there is Tor, which stands for "The Onion Router," a software download that allows Web users to mask their identity: "Anyone can use Tor — drug traffickers, child pornographers, hackers, terrorists, spies, all of whom have found it a viable means for achieving anonymity online and evading detection by law enforcement and intelligence agencies."

NSA and its British counterpart decided to penetrate Tor. Problem: One of Tor's biggest supporters is the State Department, which had invested millions of dollars in spreading software to allow pro-democracy dissidents in the Arab world and elsewhere to communicate online without being arrested by repressive regimes.

"The United States now has two competing and directly opposed policies: trying to prop up Tor and at the same time tearing it down," Harris reports.

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BUSINESS/WEATHER

Growers grateful for higher tree prices

By SCOTT McFETRIDGE
The Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Christmas trees likely will cost a little more this year, and growers like John Tillman say it's about time.

Six years of decreased demand and low prices put many growers out of business. Those who withstood the downturn are relieved they survived.

"I'm awful proud to still be in the Christmas tree business," said Tillman, who ships up to 20,000 trees each fall from nine fields south of Olympia, Wash. "We lost a lot of farmers who didn't make it through."

Prices vary according to the variety of tree, but growers this year will see about \$20 per tree, \$2 more than the last several years, according to Bryan Ostlund, executive director of Salem, Ore.-based Pacific Northwest Tree Association. Prices will likely rise as the holidays near and supply decreases.

Consumers looking to deck their



CHARLIE NEIBERGER/AP

Howell Tree Farm employees Avery Langholz, left, and Chris Allen carry a Christmas tree to load onto a customer's car Wednesday in Cumming, Iowa.

home could pay a little more than last year, but costs vary widely depending on factors such as transportation, tree-lot rental space and big-box retailers' demand that prices remain stable. For example, a 6-foot Douglas fir in Oregon, which grows about one-third of the nation's Christmas trees, could sell for \$25, while a similar tree hauled to Southern California might go for \$80.

Tara Deering-Hansen, a spokeswoman for Midwestern supermarket chain Hy-Vee, said wholesale tree prices have climbed slightly but prices are set at each store and customers might not see any increase.

Heavy snow last week slowed the shipment of trees from Michigan, which ranks third in production and supplies much of the Midwest and parts of the South.

In some loading yards, stacks of trees awaiting shipment were covered with up to 2 feet of snow.

"Getting the snow off was more work than loading the trees," said Dan Wahnhoff, co-owner of a nursery in southwestern Michigan. "It was definitely a challenge — wind and snow and cold, trucks were getting stuck — but we made it through."

In the coming years, growers expect the supply of trees to remain stable with prices gradually increasing, in part because it takes six to seven years for a seedling to grow large enough to sell.

Even with the increase, most growers are being paid less now than in the mid-2000s, when trees from new and expanded farms hit the market as demand fell. And the industry still faces challenges as competition from artificial tree manufacturers and other factors have led to a drop in trees harvested, from 20.8 million in 2012 to 17.3 million in 2012, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Dec. 1)	\$1.2809
Dollar buys (Dec. 1)	€0.7807
British pound (Dec. 1)	\$1.61
Japanese yen (Dec. 1)	¥115.00
South Korean won (Dec. 1)	₩1,076.00

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771
British pound	\$1.5671
Canada (dollar)	1.1416
China (Yuan)	6.1434
Denmark (Krone)	6.9665
Egypt (Pound)	7.1525
Euro	\$1.2455/0.8022
Hong Kong (dollar)	7.541
Hungary (Forint)	245.88
Israel (Shekel)	3.8975
Japan (Yen)	118.17
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2911
Norway (Krone)	6.9738
Philippines (Peso)	44.88
Poland (Zloty)	3.35
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7531
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3041
South Korea (Won)	1,112.27
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9642
Thailand (Baht)	52.83
Turkey (Lira)	2.2108

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., currencies of other countries in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies in one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
1-month bill	0.10
3-month bill	0.10
6-month bill	0.01
30-year bond	2.96

WEATHER OUTLOOK



Saturday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Ablene, Texas	73	48	Clr	Chattanooga	58	32	PCldy	Fort Wayne	48	30	Clcy	Louisville	54	35	Clcy	Pocatello	50	35	Rain
Akron, Ohio	41	25	Clcy	Chicago	51	33	Clcy	Fresno	65	45	Clcy	Lubbock	75	37	Clr	Portland, Maine	32	14	PCldy
Albany, N.Y.	33	16	Cldy	Cincinnati	49	33	Cldy	Goodland	72	33	Clr	Macon	60	29	Clr	Portland, Ore.	39	23	Snow
Albuquerque	64	37	Clr	Cleveland	43	27	Clcy	Grand Junction	51	31	Clcy	Madison	47	27	Clcy	Providence	37	22	Cldy
Allentown, Pa.	39	21	Clcy	Colorado Springs	65	37	Clr	Grand Rapids	41	27	Clcy	Medford	48	43	Rain	Pueblo	68	33	Clr
Amarillo	79	40	Clr	Colorado Springs	65	37	Clr	Greensboro, N.C.	52	28	PCldy	Memphis	64	44	Clcy	Rapid City	53	27	PCldy
Anchorage	27	25	Snow	Columbia, S.C.	61	33	Clr	Greensboro, N.C.	52	28	PCldy	Midland-Odessa	72	38	Clr	Reno	51	38	Clcy
Asheville	54	28	Clr	Columbus, Ga.	47	30	Clcy	Greensboro, N.C.	52	28	PCldy	Milwaukee	45	29	Clcy	Richmond	50	27	Clcy
Atlanta	58	33	Clr	Columbus, Ohio	47	30	Clcy	Hartford Spfld.	30	18	Clcy	Mpls-St Paul	40	24	Clcy	Roanoke	49	28	Clcy
Atlantic City	45	23	Clr	Concord, N.H.	77	60	Clcy	Harrisburg	26	14	Snow	Missoula	32	22	Snow	Rocky Mountain	39	25	Clcy
Austin	77	52	PCldy	Corpus Christi	77	60	Clcy	Houston	84	60	Clcy	Mobile	69	49	Clcy	Salt Lake City	59	40	Clcy
Baltimore	44	27	Clcy	Dallas-Ft Worth	76	53	Clr	Houston	78	57	Clcy	Montgomery	67	32	Clr	Sacramento	57	48	Rain
Baton Rouge	72	48	PCldy	Dayton	48	31	Clcy	Huntsville	59	33	PCldy	Nashville	56	38	Clcy	St. Louis	61	39	Clcy
Billings	26	24	Snow	Daytona Beach	68	45	Clr	Indianapolis	49	32	Clcy	New Orleans	71	51	Clr	St. Thomas	86	76	PCldy
Birmingham	63	37	Clr	Denver	68	38	Clr	Jacksonville	67	44	Clcy	New York City	40	26	Clcy	St. Thomas	86	76	PCldy
Bismarck	24	21	Clr	Des Moines	54	32	PCldy	Jacksonville	67	44	Clcy	Newark	40	25	Clcy	Salt Lake City	59	40	Clcy
Boise	51	41	Rain	Detroit	42	28	Clcy	Jacksonville	67	44	Clcy	Norfolk, Va.	51	28	PCldy	Salt Lake City	59	40	Clcy
Boston	35	22	Clcy	Duluth	42	28	Clcy	Juneau	29	14	Clcy	Norfolk, Va.	51	28	PCldy	Salt Lake City	59	40	Clcy
Bridgeport	35	22	Clcy	El Paso	74	41	Clr	Kansas City	60	42	PCldy	North Platte	70	27	Clr	San Diego	77	46	Clr
Brownsville	77	61	PCldy	El Paso	74	41	Clr	Key West	55	30	Clcy	Oklahoma City	41	26	Clcy	San Francisco	62	33	Clcy
Buffalo	40	25	Clcy	Eli	43	27	Clcy	Knoxville	55	30	Clcy	Oma	59	30	Clr	San Jose	62	33	Clcy
Burlington, Vt.	34	20	Clcy	Eugene	42	41	Snow	Lake Charles	73	55	PCldy	Orlando	72	46	Clcy	Seattle	63	30	Clcy
Caribou, Maine	20	2	Clcy	Evansville	52	36	Clcy	Lansing	41	26	Clcy	Pasadena	77	39	Clcy	Shreveport	73	54	Clcy
Charleston, S.C.	61	31	Clr	Fargo	29	18	Clcy	Las Vegas	73	49	PCldy	Pendleton	36	35	Snow	Sioux Falls	51	28	PCldy
Charleston, W.Va.	53	31	Clcy	Flagstaff	57	26	Clcy	Lincoln	62	29	Clcy	Peoria	43	26	Clcy	Sioux Falls	51	28	PCldy
Charlotte, N.C.	54	30	Clr	Fort Smith	71	48	PCldy	Little Rock	67	45	Clcy	Phoenix	81	53	Clcy	St. Louis	61	39	Clcy
								Los Angeles	70	50	PCldy	Pittsburgh	43	27	Clcy	St. Louis	61	39	Clcy

National temperature extremes
Hi: Thurs., 94, Riverside, Calif.
Lo: Thurs., -28, Jamestown, N.D.

INDEPENDENT NEWS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY

Whenever They Fight and Wherever They Live

The first Stars and Stripes was printed during the Civil War, when a band of Union soldiers published a handful of editions.

During World War I, Stars and Stripes reappeared in Paris on February 8, 1918, to serve the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), by order of General of the Armies John J. Pershing. An all-military staff produced it weekly until the war's end.

A second renaissance began on April 18, 1942, when a small group of servicemen began publishing a four-page weekly Stars and Stripes in London. They sold each copy for "tuppence" (about 5 cents) and in no time doubled their page count to eight pages, printing daily instead of weekly.

The first World War II edition of Stars and Stripes featured an interview with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. Marshall quoted Gen. Pershing, World War I Commander of the AEF, who described Stars as a major factor in sustaining morale. Stars and Stripes later found a champion and protector in Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander and later president of the United States.

Eisenhower enforced a hands-off policy in regard to Stars and Stripes that continues to the present day.

Operations expanded, following GIs to the battlefield to bring them the news. During the war, Stars and Stripes published over 30

separate editions, running up to 24 pages per issue.

At one time, Stars and Stripes had some 25 printing locations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. The Pacific edition was launched a week after VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945).

The war ended—but Stars and Stripes kept going. Its reporters and photographers continued to join American troops in the field, throughout the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, during the 1990s Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the 2003 outset of Operation Enduring Freedom, Stars and Stripes was there to report first-hand. The war in Afghanistan continues to receive steady coverage. And during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stars reporters embedded with military units in Kuwait and Iraq, as well as on Navy ships in the region.

Stars and Stripes today is a multimedia news organization. The majority of Stars and Stripes unique reporting efforts is read now in digital form, either online at stripes.com or via mobile offerings for iPhone, Android and iPad, in over 200 countries around the world.

The print newspaper is still available for servicemembers, government civilians and their families in

Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific—and in contingency areas. Washington, D.C., hosts the Central office, where daily editions are transmitted to printers in Afghanistan, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Djibouti, as well as in Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, and South Korea. Stars and Stripes also publishes several weeklies (Stripes Guam, Japan, Korea and Okinawa), designed to serve the

needs of their respective military communities.

A U.S. edition comprised exclusively of Stars and Stripes reports from around the world now serves stateside forces and veterans. The U.S. edition is published in partnership with commercial newspaper publishers who serve communities with large military populations.



STARS AND STRIPES RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

- 2014 VFW News Media Award – For outstanding contribution to a better understanding of our American way of life and its institutions and interests by honest and forthright reporting.
- 2013 Best American Newspaper Narrative Writing Contest – Notable Narrative Winner
Recipient: Martin Kuz: "Soldiers Recount Attack"
- 2013 National Headline Awards – Second Place: News Series (Forever After: A Warrior Wounded; A Family Challenged)
- 2013 min Best of Web: Redesign – Honorable Mention
Stripes UK website

- 2011 Military Photographer of the Year – Honorable Mention
Recipient: Joshua DeMotts
- 2011 Sigma Delta Chi Award – Breaking News Photography (Newspaper Circulation 100,001+ or Affiliated Website/National Magazine) Recipient: Laura Rauch: "For those I love I will sacrifice"
- 2011 John Reagan "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism – Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

- 2010 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Jon Rabinoff

- 2010 National Headline Awards – First Place: Public Service (Forcing Change) – Third Place: News Series (Coming Home: The Men of Triple Deuce)
- 2009 George Polk Awards in Journalism – George Polk Award for Military Reporting
Recipients: Charlie Reed, Leo Shane III and Kevin Barton
- 2009 min Editorial & Design Awards – Editorial Print / Special Supplement: HEROES 2009; Custom Publication Design: Stripes GAMER

- 2007 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Monte Morin

- 2006 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipients: Monte Morin, Joe Giordano; Honorable mention: Nancy Montgomery Photography; Fred Zimmerman
- 2005 Military Reporters and Editors Awards – Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Steve Lower Photography; Terry Boyd
- 2004 American Legion Excellence in Journalism Award – Ground Truth Series
- 2003 Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Award – First Amendment, Finalist

Frazz



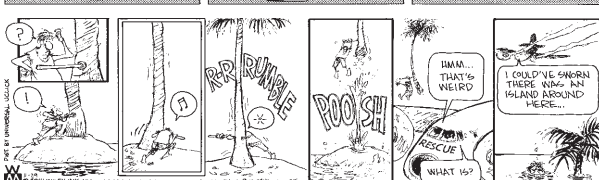
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



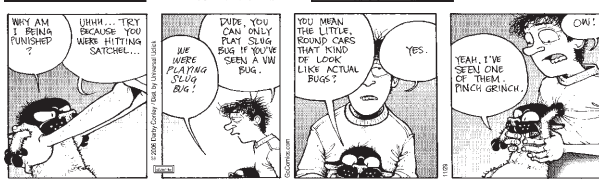
Non Sequitur



Candorville



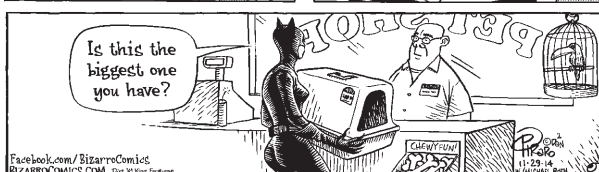
Get Fuzzy



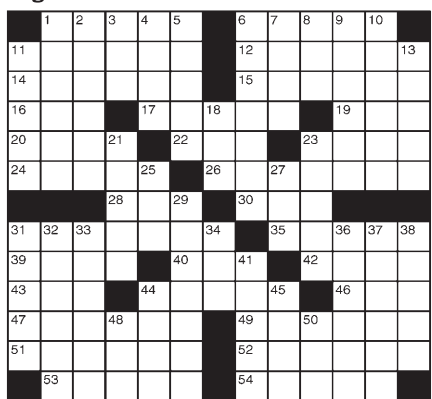
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Raiment
- 6 Criminal
- 11 Become extinct
- 12 Argentine grasslands
- 14 Plummer or Peet
- 15 Slide specimen
- 16 Boom times
- 17 Hose woes
- 19 Under the weather
- 20 United nations
- 22 Branch
- 23 Citric quaffs
- 24 Church council
- 26 Actress Eden
- 28 Fond du —, Wis.
- 30 Likewise not
- 31 Tumbler
- 35 Zingers
- 39 Transvaal trekker
- 40 Roulette bet
- 42 Cat call
- 43 "Guinness Book" suffix

DOWN

- 1 Like a golf ball
- 2 Logic
- 3 A billion years
- 4 Lather
- 5 Nathan's "Castle" co-star
- 6 Highway construction worker
- 7 "Desire Under the —"
- 8 Seven-faced doctor of film
- 9 Big name in flatware
- 10 "Whether 'tis — in the mind ..."
- 11 Paints messily
- 13 Burrito ingredient
- 18 Wall St. wheeler-dealer
- 21 Shade

- 23 James — Garfield
- 25 Brylcreem application
- 27 Plagiarize
- 29 Buzzard's breakfast
- 31 Perpendicular to the keel
- 32 Universal
- 33 Give the same old story
- 34 Colonial castoff
- 36 Fast-food freebie, sometimes
- 37 Half a pair for baby
- 38 Talk a blue streak?
- 41 Pulitzer category
- 44 Ethereal
- 45 Mosque bigwig
- 48 Meadow
- 50 Wardrobe malfunction

Answer to Previous Puzzle



11-29

CRYPTOQUIP

G Q Q - O G Z C X O Z J N B G O X N
C O Y P Z W K D G J K V W V N A Z K K
J G O X I Z A D O Y S Z J X F O X K D N :

ZKK-XDOOZBYJ PDIYSKDN.
Yesterday's Cryptquip: BECAUSE HE'S THE ONLY MAN WHO REFUSES TO BE INTIMIDATED, HE REALLY STANDS OUT FROM THE COWD.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: Q equals F

SCOREBOARD

Sports on AFN

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Pro basketball

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	Oth
Toronto	12	2	.867	619
Miami	8	7	.538	619
Boston	4	8	.333	776
Dallas	4	12	.250	694
Philadelphia	0	15	.000	133

Southwest Division

Southeast Division			
Washington	9	5	.643
Atlanta	7	6	.538
Miami	8	7	.538

Central Division

Charlotte	4	12	.250
Central Division			
Chicago	9	6	.600
Milwaukee	9	7	.563

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Southwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Memphis	12	3	.800
San Antonio	10	5	.667
New Orleans	11	6	.643
Portland	12	3	.800
Oklahoma City	11	5	.688
Utah	10	5	.667
Golden State	12	3	.800
Phoenix	10	6	.625
Sacramento	9	7	.563
L.A. Lakers	3	12	.200

Northwest Division

San Antonio	10	4	.714
Dallas	11	5	.688
New Orleans	7	6	.538
Northwest Division			

Pacific Division

Denver	7	8	.467
Utah	5	11	.313
Oklahoma City	4	12	.250
Minnesota	3	10	.231

Wednesday's games

Brooklyn	91	Philadelphia	91
Golden State	111	Orlando	86
San Antonio	102	Charlotte	97
Cleveland	113	Washington	87
Memphis	105	New York	102
Toronto	126	Atlanta	115
San Antonio	104	Phoenix	102
Oklahoma City	97	Utah	82
Houston	102	Sacramento	89
San Antonio	106	Indiana	100
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Memphis	99	L.A. Lakers	93

Thursday's games

Chicago	80	Boston	80
Golden State	104	Charlotte	97
New Orleans	101	Atlanta	115
Memphis	105	New York	102
Toronto	126	Atlanta	115
San Antonio	104	Phoenix	102
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NHL/SPORTS BRIEFS

Predators knock off Oilers in OT

Rinne makes 37 saves as Edmonton suffers eighth straight defeat

By JIM DIAMOND
The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Pekka Rinne gave the Nashville Predators a chance to overcome their slow start.

Rinne made 37 saves and Filip Forsberg scored at 3:55 of overtime to lift the Predators over Edmonton 1-0 Thursday night, handing the Oilers their eighth consecutive defeat.

Nashville won its third straight thanks in large part to Rinne, who stopped Jordan Eberle on a penalty shot early in the extra session.

In the opening period, Rinne made nine saves before the Predators registered their first shot on goal. It was Rinne's second shut-out of the season and the 34th of his career. His 15 wins lead the NHL.

"Early on, if it weren't for him, we would have been in trouble," Nashville coach Peter Laviolette said. "The first eight or nine minutes, I think everybody would admit we were not sharp. It was a really strong effort by him."

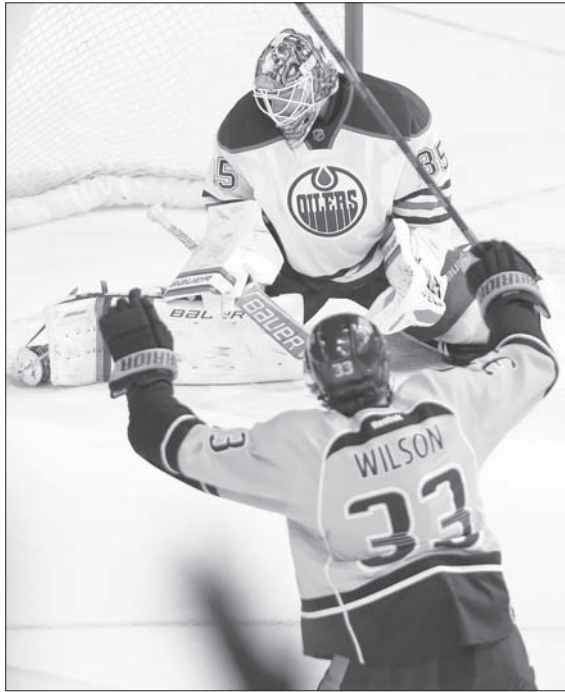
Viktor Fasth had 24 saves for Edmonton, which fell to 0-11-2 against Western Conference teams.

"We haven't been able to take many positives lately, where at the start of the season, we felt good about the way we played even though maybe we came out on the short end of the stick," Oilers coach Dallas Eakins said. "This one for the group was a step forward even though we couldn't get both the points."

Seconds after Forsberg hit the crossbar with a shot and Nashville defenseman Roman Josi hit the post, Forsberg spun to free himself from a defender and beat Fasth with a wrist shot from the left circle.

"It was a really long shift, actually. I was pretty tired when I got the last shot there, so I was just trying to spin off the guy and try to hit the net," Forsberg said. "I was fortunate that it went in."

The rookie's 10 goals lead the team. Rinne's best save came 13 seconds into overtime when he denied Eberle's penalty shot after Predators captain Shea Weber was called for closing his hand on the puck while it was in the crease. Rinne made the ensuing



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Nashville center Colin Wilson (33) celebrates after a shot by teammate Filip Forsberg, not shown, got past Edmonton Oilers goalie Viktor Fasth (35) in overtime to give the Predators a 1-0 win on Thursday in Nashville, Tenn.

stop on Eberle with his left skate against the post.

"He is really nifty in penalty shots. I think that he is one of the better shooters stats-wise in the NHL in penalty shots and shootouts," Rinne said. "I thought he got a little bit too close to me and I was able to get my leg over there and he didn't put it over my leg."

Eberle thought he had Rinne beat.

"I just had to get it upstairs," Eberle said.

"I think when you go down that way, it's extremely tough and you feel like you let your teammates down."

The Predators finished 0-for-5 on the power play. They are an NHL-worst 1-for-37 at home this season with the man advantage.

NHL scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Montreal	23	16	6	1	33	61/57
Tampa Bay	23	15	6	2	32	81/63
Detroit	22	12	5	5	29	64/54
Boston	23	13	9	1	27	59/57
Toronto	22	11	9	2	24	59/67
Ottawa	21	10	9	2	24	58/56
Florida	20	8	6	6	22	42/51
Buffalo	22	6	14	2	14	37/72

Metropolitan Division

Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Pittsburgh	21	15	4	2	32	76/49
N.Y. Islanders	22	16	6	0	32	72/59
Washington	22	13	6	3	29	58/57
N.Y. Rangers	21	9	8	4	22	60/62
New Jersey	22	9	10	3	21	53/63
Philadelphia	21	8	10	3	19	59/66
Carolina	21	6	12	3	15	48/63
Columbus	21	6	13	2	14	51/76

Western Conference

Central Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Nashville	22	15	5	2	32	62/45
St. Louis	22	14	6	2	30	46/46
Chicago	22	13	8	1	27	66/46
Winnipeg	24	12	9	3	27	51/54
Minnesota	21	12	9	0	24	58/48
Dallas	22	9	9	4	22	64/74
Colorado	23	8	10	5	21	59/73

Pacific Division

Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Anaheim	23	14	4	5	33	63/56
Vancouver	22	15	6	1	31	67/61
Calgary	24	14	8	2	30	75/64
Los Angeles	23	12	6	5	29	64/61
San Jose	24	10	10	4	24	62/66
Arizona	23	9	11	3	21	57/71
Edmonton	23	6	14	3	15	51/78

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Wednesday's games

Winnipeg 2, Buffalo 1
N.Y. Islanders 3, Washington 2, OT
Detroit 5, Philadelphia 2
Tampa Bay 4, N.Y. Rangers 3
Florida 1, Carolina 0
Pittsburgh 4, Toronto 3, OT
Los Angeles 4, Minnesota 0
Chicago 3, Colorado 2
Calgary 2, San Jose 0

Thursday's game

Nashville 1, Edmonton 0, OT

Friday's games

N.Y. Rangers at Philadelphia
Chicago at Anaheim
N.Y. Islanders at Washington
Winnipeg at Boston
Montreal at Buffalo
Detroit at New Jersey
Carolina at Pittsburgh
Vancouver at Columbus
Ottawa at Florida
Edmonton at St. Louis
Minnesota at Dallas

Saturday's games

Philadelphia at N.Y. Rangers
Washington at Toronto
Buffalo at Montreal
Ottawa at Tampa Bay
Pittsburgh at Carolina
New Jersey at N.Y. Islanders
Columbus at Nashville
St. Louis at Minnesota
Dallas at Colorado
Calgary at Arizona
Chicago at Los Angeles
Anaheim at San Jose

Thursday

Predators 1, Oilers 0 (OT)

Edmonton 0-11-2, Nashville, Forsberg 10

Nashville 0-0-0-1-1

Over time—1, Nashville, Forsberg 10

Goal—Weber 1, Nashville, Forsberg 10

Missed Penalty Shot—Eberle, Edmonton, 13

Shots on Goal—Edmonton 14-9-11-3-3

Goals—Edmonton 14-9-11-3-3

Power-play opportunities—Edmonton

0 of 4; Nashville 0 of 5.

Goals—Edmonton, Fasth 2-5-2 (25

shots-24 saves). Nashville, Rinne 15-3-1

(27)

A-17,113 (17,113). T-2:34.

Briefly

Chalmers moves into lead at Australian Open

The Associated Press

SYDNEY — Two-time former champion Greg Chalmers took a one-stroke lead Friday at the Australian Open after a 5-under 66 while marquee attractions Rory McIlroy and Adam Scott weren't far behind on a tough day for scoring.

Chalmers had seven birdies in his second round to move to 5-under 137 after 36 holes.

Defending champion McIlroy played in difficult afternoon conditions at The Australian Golf Club and he persevered for an up-and-down 69 to be in a group

tied for second.

Scott and American Jordan Spieth played together in calmer morning conditions and Spieth (72) was in a group tied for sixth, two behind.

Braun optimistic about injured right hand

MILWAUKEE — Milwaukee Brewers outfielder Ryan Braun is cautiously optimistic that an offseason procedure has fixed a nagging nerve problem near his right thumb.

The injury has hampered the

2011 NL MVP the last two seasons. Braun's average dipped to a career-low .266 in 2014.

Braun had a procedure known as cryotherapy days after the season ended in October. He said Wednesday that he felt "amazing" after taking swings following the procedure.

Pele says 'nothing serious' with health

SAO PAULO — Brazilian great Pele said Thursday he is not seriously ill, easing fears that his health deteriorated while

being treated for a urinary tract infection.

The 74-year-old Pele used his official Twitter account to deny widespread reports that said his condition worsened and that he was put in intensive care.

"I want to take this opportunity to let you know that I am doing fine," he said. "I was not put into intensive care today, I was simply relocated to a special room ... for privacy purposes only."

Pele has enjoyed good health in recent years despite needing to undergo surgeries for a hip replacement and a detached retina.



RICK RYAN/AP

Rory McIlroy grimaces after his tee shot at the 14th hole during the second round of the Australian Open on Friday.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Badgers rally past Hoyas in Bahamas

No. 2 Wisconsin survives first challenge of season from upset-minded Georgetown

By TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas — Duke Dukan thought he had created a turnover with a held ball. The referees said he was guilty of a foul instead.

It's a play that won't make highlight reels, won't get pointed to in any box score.

But it sparked No. 2 Wisconsin into finding a way to survive its first test this season.

Sam Dekkers scored 17 points, Nigel Hayes' acrobatic tip-in with 20 seconds left capped his 15-point day, and Wisconsin overcame a nine-point second-half deficit to beat upset-minded Georgetown 68-65 on Thursday in the Battle 4 Atlantis semifinals.

"I have bruises," Wisconsin coach Bo Ryan said. "And I was watching."

The Badgers hadn't trailed in the second half this season, but found themselves down 53-44 with 11:36 left. A 22-6 run put Wisconsin (5-0) up for good, and the Badgers could finally exhale when D'Vauntes Smith-Rivera's three-pointer rimmed out as time expired.

Smith-Rivera, who was 5-for-5 from beyond the arc until the game's final shot, led all scorers with 29 for Georgetown (4-1).

"It was a fairly good look," Smith-Rivera said. "I knew they were going to trap me coming off the screen, so I kind of wanted to take them away and come back and get a better look at the basket. But it didn't go down."

Wisconsin's title game Oklahoma in Friday's semifinals. Georgetown, which got 10 points from Joshua Smith, will play Butler in an all-Big East matchup for third place.

"These first two games have felt like Big East games, to be honest with you," Georgetown coach John Thompson III said. "So why not make it official tomorrow?"

Bronson Koenig tied a career best with 14 points for Wisconsin, which survived despite a six-point, 1-for-8 shooting day from standout center Frank Kaminsky.

Dukan was called for a foul with 7:25 left, arguing it to no avail.

He took his frustration out on the Hoyas instead.

Dukan scored all eight of his points in the next 80 seconds, turning a four-point deficit into a two-point Wisconsin lead with 6:04 left and the Badgers didn't trail again. He also dove for a loose ball after Kaminsky missed a free throw, and on that extended possession Koenig made a jumper for a 62-59 lead with 4:27 left.

"That kind of was the trigger point for me," Dukan said. "Got me amped up."

Georgetown's players didn't get back to their hotel rooms until around 1 a.m. Friday, thanks to the Hoyas needing overtime to beat No. 18 Florida 66-65 in the quarterfinals.

Less than 15 hours later, they tipped off against the Badgers.

Rest might be overrated: The Hoyas made their first six shots. Midway through the second half, Georgetown was at 61 percent shooting for the game, but the Hoyas missed eight of their final 10 shots.

For the game, Wisconsin had nine assists and 14 turnovers, while Georgetown had seven assists and 15 turnovers.

"That's how hard we were playing each other," Ryan said.



TIM AYLEN/AP

Georgetown's Jabril Trawick, right, battles Wisconsin's Frank Kaminsky for the ball during Thursday's Battle 4 Atlantis tournament semifinal in Paradise Island, Bahamas.

Top 25 roundup

Paige, Tar Heels pull away from Bruins in second half

The Associated Press

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas — Marcus Paige had 21 points and five assists, Justin Jackson scored 12 points and No. 5 North Carolina beat No. 22 UCLA 78-56 in the Battle 4 Atlantis consolation round.

Isaiah Hicks and J.P. Tokoto each scored 10 points for the Tar Heels (4-1), who closed the first half on a 32-11 run and put the game absolutely away with a 15-0 second-half run.

Paige had back-to-back three-pointers to get that second run going, as North Carolina turned a nine-point edge into a 62-38 lead with 9:12 left. The Tar Heels will play No. 18 Florida on Friday in the fifth-place game.

Norman Powell had 15 points for UCLA (4-2).

No. 18 Florida 56, UAB 47: At Paradise Island, Bahamas, Michael Frazier scored 14 points, Chris Chiozza added 13 and the Gators survived another rough



TIM AYLEN/AP

North Carolina's J.P. Tokoto dunks during Thursday's win over UCLA at the Battle 4 Atlantis tournament in Paradise Island, Bahamas.

offensive night to beat the Blazers in the Battle 4 Atlantis consolation round.

Kasey Hill's layup with 1:26 left — just the second two-point basket after halftime for Florida — put the Gators (3-2) up 51-47 and they held on from there, despite shooting 34 percent from the field.

Tosin Mehinti and Robert Brown each scored 12 points for UAB (2-4).

No. 11 Kansas 76, Rhode Island 60: At Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Perry Ellis scored 17 points to help the Jayhawks beat the Rams in the opening round of the Orlando Classic.

Ellis had 11 points in the opening 20 minutes to help Kansas cruise to a 43-25 halftime lead.

Frank Mason III added 12 points for Kansas (3-1), which has a pair of victories since a 72-40 loss to No. 1 Kentucky on Nov. 18. E.C. Matthews scored 20 points for Rhode Island (3-1),

which was coming off a 66-62 overtime victory over then-No. 21 Nebraska on Saturday. Gilvydas Biruta had 16 points and seven rebounds.

Kansas will face Tennessee in the semifinals Friday. Tennessee beat Santa Clara 64-57.

No. 20 Michigan State 77, Rider 45: At Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Denzel Valentine had a career-high 19 points, Bryn Forbes added 15 and The Spartans rolled past the Broncos in the first round of the Orlando Classic.

Valentine hit two long-range jumpers and Forbes added a third that extended the Spartans' advantage to 43-15 3 minutes into the second half. Another three-pointer by Valentine made it 76-41 with 4 minutes left.

Travis Trice had eight of his 10 points to help Michigan State (4-1) go up 32-11 at the half.

Matt Lopez scored 12 of his 14 points in the second half for Rider (2-3).

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Running wild

Rebirth of ground game has teams' offenses piling up the yards

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

There goes Melvin Gordon, ripping off another long run. And there's Samaje Perine piling up yards in punishing fashion. Oh, look, here comes Tevin Coleman — and there he goes, sprinting away from a bunch of flailing defenders.

College football teams have been running wild this season, averaging more yards per carry and per game than at any time in recent years. Having game-breakers such as Gordon, Perine and Coleman carrying the ball has helped lead this ground game revolution, but something more is happening.

Defenses that have been built to withstand getting bombarded by passes and have been stretched thin by spread offenses for years are now finding it hard to plug holes. Offenses have rediscovered the running game, doing so with diversity and creativity.

"I don't think there's any question there is some correlation," said Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy, whose spread offense has always strived for a more balanced approach. "I think defenses ... are improved in stopping spread offenses and I think teams are leaning back more toward the run than they did maybe a few years ago."

Eighteen FBS teams are averaging more than 250 yards rushing per game. Last season, just 13 did that. The year before it was eight. In 2011 it was seven. In 2009, four teams averaged more than 250 yards rushing per game, and three of them were triple-option teams: Georgia Tech, Air Force and Navy.

Nationally, yards per carry in FBS was 4.22 in 2008. In 2011, it had inched up to 4.28. Then it jumped to 4.40 in 2012 and this season it's 4.50.

"I've seen it come full circle," said West Virginia coach Dana Holgorsen, a coaching descendant of Hal Mumme and Mike Leach's pass-happy Air Raid offense. He's developed a more balanced approach in recent years.

California coach Sonny Dykes, another member of the Air Raid family tree, said one of the first steps toward making the Air Raid more grounded was changing the way offensive linemen lined up.

In the Air Raid and schemes like it, offensive linemen take wide splits, setting up several yards apart. This forces defenses to spread from side to side, putting more distance between edge pass rushers and quarterbacks and creating clearer throwing lanes.

The down side came in the running game. "It really limits the schemes that you can run from the run-game perspective," Dykes said. "We all felt like we wanted to have a little bit more run game. As a result the splits of the offensive linemen started to change. Instead of really wide they were close together. That allowed more pulling and that type of thing."

When those pass-heavy teams did start running the ball, what they found was defenses that had shrunk.

Instead of the standard 4-3 (four defensive linemen and three linebackers) or 3-4 alignments, many teams had gone to a 4-2-5 setup or something similar with an extra defensive back to cover extra receivers.

"People recruit to stop the spread. A lot of times those guys are more space players than box players," said Baylor coach Art Briles, whose version of the spread has become as good at running through opponents as it is at throwing over them.

TCU coach Gary Patterson, a former defensive coordinator who converted to a spread offense this season, said stopping the run is all about numbers and leverage.

"Trying to find ways to get more people in the box because they can stretch you vertically," he said. "That's the million-dollar question for defensive coordinators on a week-to-week basis against those kinds of offenses."

It's not just the spread though. Wisconsin

doesn't spread the field, but few teams run the ball better than the Badgers and Heisman Trophy contender Gordon, who set an FBS record with 408 yards rushing against Nebraska two weeks ago — only to have it broken the very next Saturday by Perine. Oklahoma's fabulous freshman went for 427 against Kansas.

Chris Brown, author of the book "The Essential Smart Football," said he sees more teams using misdirection — the offense flows one direction and the runner goes the other — and pre-snap motion to freeze defenders and spring runners.

"Either through the option stuff, whether it's triple-option or read-option, but then also just fakes: Fake sweeps, fake counters. Window dressing for your base plays have come back in vogue," Brown said. "Both Auburn and Wisconsin, who run pretty different offenses, both of them run a lot of those jet sweeps and they fake a lot of jet sweeps before handing off to pretty good running backs."

Gordon is averaging 8.30 yards per carry, on pace to break Barry Sanders' single-season mark for runners with at least 280 carries of 7.64 set in his astounding 1988 season. Sanders ran a record 2,628 yards in 11 games. Gordon is in reach of that mark but he'll need more games to get there. Gordon has 2,109 yards in 11 games with at least two more left.

Indiana's Coleman could also top Sanders' yards-per-carry mark. He has run for 1,906 yards and 7.91 per carry.

At a time when the value of running backs has never been lower at the next level — none have been drafted in the first round the past two seasons — Gordon, Coleman, Perine and a host of others are doing their best to change that perception.

"All of us running backs around the country are trying to make a statement that we are important," Gordon said. "That we aren't easily replaceable."

Wisconsin's
Melvin Gordon
MORRY GASH/AP



Indiana running back
Tevin Coleman, right
DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

College GameDay



JAY LAPETRE/AP

Player to watch

J.T. Barrett QB/Ohio State

Ohio State's offense relies heavily upon freshman quarterback J.T. Barrett, whose 42 touchdowns (33 passing, nine rushing) match the Big Ten record set by Drew Brees with Purdue in 1998.

"That's pretty powerful stuff," Buckeyes coach Urban Meyer said.

The Buckeyes must get past rival Michigan to remain in contention for the College Football Playoff. Next week, they'll play for the Big Ten Championship.

Michigan at No. 7 Ohio State
6 p.m. Sunday, CET
AFN-Sports



BUTCH DELL/AP

Auburn running back Cameron Artis-Payne, the SEC rushing leader, could play a key part for the Tigers on Saturday in their bid to spoil No. 2 Alabama's quest for a spot in the College Football Playoff.

THE POWER CONFERENCES

ACC			
Atlantic Division			
	Conf.	W	All
Florida St.	8	0	11
Clemson	6	2	8
Louisville	5	3	8
Boston College	4	4	6
No. State	1	6	5
Syracuse	1	6	3
Wake Forest	1	6	3
Coastal Division			
	Conf.	W	All
Georgia Tech.	6	2	9
North Carolina	4	3	6
Duke	4	3	8
Virginia	3	4	5
Pittsburgh	3	4	5
Miami	3	4	5
Virginia Tech.	2	5	6

Game of the week: Virginia at Virginia Tech. The winner of the Commonwealth Cup also earns bowl eligibility. The loser stays home — and for Tech, that would be the first time that's happened since 1992. The Cavaliers (5-6) are the only Coastal Division team never to have beaten the Hokies (5-6) since they joined the ACC in 2004, losing 10 matchups and scoring more than 14 points only once.

Inside the numbers: ACC teams have beaten at least one school from each of the other five power conferences, but in the only ACC-SEC matchup so far, Georgia routed Clemson 45-21.

Player to watch: North Carolina QB Marquise Williams. He ranks among league leaders in rushing, passing and total offense heading into Saturday's game with N.C. State. And in each of the past two games, he's flirted with reaching 400 yards of total offense.

Big Ten			
East			
	Conf.	W	All
Ohio St.	7	0	10
Michigan	6	1	9
Maryland	4	3	7
Michigan	3	4	5
Penn St.	2	5	6
Rutgers	2	5	6
Indiana	0	7	3
West			
	Conf.	W	All
Wisconsin	6	1	9
Minnesota	5	2	8
Nebraska	4	3	8
Iowa	4	3	7
Northwestern	3	4	5
Illinois	2	5	6
Purdue	1	6	3

Game of the week: No. 7 Ohio State vs. Michigan. The Buckeyes strive to keep alive their bid to reach the College Football Playoff. The Buckeyes (10-1, 7-0, No. 6 CFP) are heavy favorites over the Wolverines (5-6, 3-4), who couldn't come up with a better way to become bowl eligible than by defeating their archrivals.

Inside The Numbers: Maryland's Brad Craddock has made 23 straight field goals, one short of the Big Ten record set by Mike Nugent of Ohio State from 2001-02. ... Rutgers QB Gary Nova is second nationally in passing yards per completion (15.47).

Player to watch: Maryland QB C.J. Brown. A sixth-year senior, Brown plays his final home game against Rutgers. He has already been part of a school-record 54 touchdowns and is 516 yards shy of the total offense mark. He faces a Scarlet Knights team that allowed 45 points at Michigan State last weekend.

Big 12			
	Conf.	W	All
TCU	7	1	8
Baylor	6	1	8
Kansas St.	6	1	8
Oklahoma	5	3	9
Texas	5	4	6
West Virginia	4	4	6
Oklahoma St.	3	5	5
Texas Tech.	2	6	3
Kansas	1	7	3
Iowa St.	0	7	2

Game of the week: No. 6 TCU won 48-10 at Texas on Thanksgiving night. The Horned Frogs sent a message in just the second Thanksgiving matchup in the program's 1,200-game history, routing the Longhorns to stay in the hunt for their first Big 12 title.

Inside the numbers: Baylor WR Corey Coleman has averaged 40.3 yards on his 11 career TD catches. He also has the nation's longest active streak with TD catches in seven consecutive games. ... Iowa State, which hosts West Virginia, is coming off its best non-overtime offensive game in six years, but are still looking for their first conference victory.

Player to watch: West Virginia WR Kevin White. He is the Big 12 leader with 98 catches for 1,270 yards, and his nine TD catches are tied with Coleman for the league lead. White's 8.9 catches per game and 115 yards per game both rank in the top five among FBS players.

Pac-12			
North			
	Conf.	W	All
Oregon	7	1	10
Stanford	4	4	6
Washington	3	5	7
California	3	5	6
Oregon St.	2	6	5
Washington St.	2	6	3
South			
	Conf.	W	All
Arizona St.	6	2	9
UCLA	6	2	9
Arizona	6	2	9
Southern Cal	6	3	7
Utah	4	4	7
Colorado	0	8	2

Game of the week: No. 13 Arizona State at No. 12 Arizona on Friday. The annual battle for the Territorial Cup is one of the most anticipated in the 88-game history of this desert rivalry. Both teams are still in the hunt for the Pac-12 South Division title and both are ranked heading into the game for the first time since 1986.

Inside the numbers: Washington State's Connor Halliday and Oregon State's Marcus Mariota lead the league with 32 touchdown passes each, followed by California's Jared Goff with 31 and USC's Cody Kessler with 30.

Player to watch: Arizona RB Nick Walcott. He ran for 218 yards and three touchdowns on a soggy night in Utah last week and is the first freshman in school history — fourth in the Pac-12 — to rush for more than 1,000 yards (1,085) in a season.

SERVICE ACADEMIES

Air Force
at Colorado State
Last week: Lost to San Diego State, 30-14

Army
does not play
Last week: Lost to Fordham, 42-31
Next game: vs. Navy, Dec. 13 at Baltimore

Navy
at South Alabama
Last week: Beat Georgia Southern, 52-19
Next game: vs. Army, Dec. 13 at Baltimore

AP TOP 25 SCHEDULE	
Thursday	
No. 6 TCU	48, Texas 10
Friday	
No. 9 UCLA	vs. Stanford
No. 12 Arizona	vs. No. 13 Arizona State
No. 17 Missouri	vs. Arkansas
No. 19 Marshall	vs. Western Kentucky
No. 21 Colorado State	at Air Force
Saturday	
No. 1 Florida State	vs. Florida
No. 2 Alabama	vs. No. 15 Auburn
No. 3 Oregon	at Oregon State
No. 4 Mississippi State	at No. 18 Mississippi
No. 5 Baylor	vs. Texas Tech at Arlington, Texas
No. 7 Ohio State	vs. Michigan
No. 8 Georgia	vs. No. 16 Georgia Tech
No. 10 Michigan State	at Penn State
No. 11 Kansas State	vs. Kansas
No. 14 Wisconsin	vs. No. 22 Minnesota
No. 23 Clemson	vs. South Carolina
No. 24 Louisville	vs. Kentucky
No. 25 Boise State	vs. Utah State

SEC			
East			
	Conf.	W	All
Missouri	6	1	9
Georgia	6	2	9
Florida	4	4	6
South Carolina	3	5	6
Tennessee	2	6	5
Kentucky	2	6	5
Vanderbilt	0	7	3
West			
	Conf.	W	All
Alabama	6	1	10
Mississippi St.	6	1	10
Auburn	4	3	8
Mississippi	4	3	8
LSU	4	4	4
Kansas & M	3	5	7
Texas A&M	2	5	6

Game of the week: No. 15 Auburn at No. 2 Alabama. As usual, there is plenty on the line in the Iron Bowl when Alabama (No. 1 CFP) hosts Auburn (No. 15 CFP) on Saturday evening. The Tide can clinch the SEC Western Division and solidify its standing in the College Football Playoff field while the Tigers would love nothing more than to stop Alabama for a second season in a row.

Inside the numbers: Georgia has 34 rushing touchdowns this season, which represents the second-highest total in school history. The school record is 39, set in 1971.

Player to watch: Auburn RB Cameron Artis-Payne. The Tigers' chances of upsetting Alabama depend in part on whether the SEC rushing leader delivers a huge performance for the Tigers. Artis-Payne has rushed for 1,405 yards, or 25.3 more than anyone else in the SEC.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Boykin leads No. 6 TCU to rout of Texas

By JIM VERTUNO
The Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — TCU took the field on Thanksgiving night determined to send a message to the rest of college football.

The sixth-ranked Horned Frogs delivered one with a 48-10 romp over Texas, and the tens of thousands of their fans who stuck around to the end will be happy to keep chanting "T-C-U!" to anyone who may have missed it.

Are you listening, College Football Playoff committee?

Trevone Boykin passed for two touchdowns and ran for another, and TCU's defense dominated the Longhorns and quarterback Tyrone Swoopes, sending Texas to one of the worst home losses in program history.

The win kept the Horned Frogs (10-1, 7-1) in the hunt for their first Big 12 title. The question is whether it was impressive enough to impact the playoff standings, where they sit at No. 5, one spot out of contention for a national championship.

"You want style points? The style points tonight were defense, turnovers, doing the things you needed to do," TCU coach Gary Patterson said.

The Horned Frogs forced six turnovers, five by Swoopes, and scored on an early fumble return and a late interception. TCU held Texas (6-6, 5-4) to 290 total yards and made the Longhorns pay for every mistake. Five of Texas' turnovers set up 24 points for the Horned Frogs.

TCU plays Iowa State, the last-place team in the Big 12, to end the regular season on Dec. 6. The playoff pairings will be announced the next day.

"You know, this team deserves to go home and win a championship," Patterson said. "We've got one more to do it, and I'm very proud of them. I'm finally going to go maybe smile once, but we've got to get ready to play Iowa State."

Always an outsider, the move to the Big 12 was supposed to end the national debate over whether the Horned Frogs deserved a place among college football's elite if they were in position to win the league. The prospect of winning the Big 12 title and



ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

TCU's Cory O'Meally, left, holds off Texas' Paul Boyette Jr. during the second half of Thursday's game in Austin, Texas.

still getting left out of the playoff would be a bitter pill for the Horned Frogs.

Their problem? A 61-58 loss at Baylor in which they squandered a big fourth-quarter lead.

And the Horned Frogs left plenty of room for doubt when they struggled to

beat a struggling Kansas team two weeks ago. They came to Austin facing plenty of national skepticism and a surging Texas squad that had won three straight behind one of the Big 12's best defenses.

"If you didn't know anything about us, you'd have thought we were a 5-7 team,"

Boykin said. "They were talking about us like we hadn't done anything. It kind of ticked us off."

The loss leaves Texas needing to win whichever bowl it plays in to avoid a losing season in coach Charlie Strong's first year.



MARK DUNCAN/AP

Ohio State coach Urban Meyer, center, gets doused by senior wide receiver Jake Stoneburner (11) after beating Michigan in 2012.

Ohio State wary of Michigan

By RUSTY MILLER
The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Forget the 5-6 record and the talk about Brady Hoke getting fired.

When Ohio State's coaches and players look at Michigan, they see a dangerous powerhouse desperate because it's cornered.

Buckeyes coach Urban Meyer was asked this week if he could tell Michigan had "issues."

"No, because you watch videotape and the talent is there," he said. "They're going to give us everything they got — and what they've got is a lot."

By almost every measure, this has been a forgettable year for the Wolverines, particularly on offense. They rank near the bottom in most major-college stats, including 111th in scoring (20.3 points a game), 113th in passing (163 yards) and 114th in total offense (330 yards).

The clincher is they have scored 11 or fewer points in four



Michigan (5-6)
at No. 7 Ohio State (10-1)
AFN-Sports
6 p.m. Saturday CET

games this season.

But don't try telling the seventh-ranked Buckeyes any of that.

Immersed in preparations for the showdown with the Wolverines on Saturday, the Buckeyes don't believe what they're watching on video from Michigan's games earlier this season.

"They have a lot of talent, from the quarterback position to the receivers. They have talent all over the field," Ohio State linebacker Curtis Grant said. "It's kind of

hard to wonder what's going on up there, like 'How come they're not winning more games?' I just got done watching film. They have multiple running backs. They have good receivers. Any time this team wanted to explode, they could and just go crazy."

It's not surprising that the Buckeyes see something that others have not. They have a vivid recall of last year's game, when quarterback Devin Gardner and Co. lit up the Buckeyes' vaunted defense for 603 yards and 41 points — and still lost.

Michael Bennett, Ohio State's senior defensive tackle, spent most of that game chasing Wolverines. Gardner completed 32 of 45 passes for a gaudy 451 yards and four touchdowns and rushed for another score.

Hoke, for his part, doesn't think success one year means much in the next meeting.

"I do not (believe in) the carry-over from year to year," he said. "They are two different teams."

NFL



Dallas quarterback Tony Romo, front, is sacked by Philadelphia's Brandon Graham during the first half of Thursday's game in Arlington, Texas. Romo and the Cowboys lost their third straight home game.

Feast: McCoy outshines Murray

FROM BACK PAGE

They took sole possession of the division lead with four games remaining, including the Dec. 14 rematch.

"We're not into statements," Philadelphia coach Chip Kelly said. "We've given ourselves the opportunity to play meaningful football in December, and in this league, every week is a whole different deal, a whole different animal."

McCoy, who led the NFL with 1,604 yards rushing last season, had his fourth 100-yard game in the past seven after going without one through the first five weeks. He secured his fourth 1,000-yard season since 2010, and the Eagles improved to 6-0 on Thanksgiving.

Although his deficit to Dallas' DeMarco Murray in the rushing race is probably insurmountable, McCoy outgained Murray, who was held under 100 yards for just the second time this season.

Murray finished with 73 yards and Dallas' only touchdown on 20 carries, the last a 6-yard loss when he was dropped by Mychal Kendricks on fourth-and-1 early in the fourth quarter.

"I don't really compare myself," said McCoy, who had a season-high 25 carries. "I just try to be me. I don't really get into that whole, especially during the season, who's this, who's that thing. In the big picture, we're trying to win games."

Things to consider after Philadelphia won its first Thanksgiving meeting with Dallas since 1989, a 27-0 win for the Eagles in Jerry Jones' first season as owner of the Cowboys:

Ragged Romo: The 34-year-old Romo wasn't around for last year's playoffs-or-bust finale because he was two days removed from back surgery. This time he was trying to play in a quick turnaround for the first time—about 90 hours after a dramatic win at the New York Giants— and following yet another back injury.

He threw two interceptions and didn't have a touchdown pass for the first time in 39 games as the Cowboys (8-4) dropped their third straight at home.

"It was definitely short just from the Sunday night coming to here," said Romo, who was 18-for-29 for 199 yards. "I don't really think that had much to do with the outcome of the game. I think they just played better than us."

Smooth Sanchez: Making his fourth start since Nick Foles was sidelined by a broken collarbone, Sanchez was 9-for-11 for 99 yards in the first quarter. That included a 27-yard scoring pass to Jordan Matthews when Sanchez hit the rookie in stride on a crossing route for a 14-0 lead.

Sanchez finished 20-for-29 for 217 yards with a touchdown and no interceptions two years after he was the starter for the New York Jets and infamously ran into the backside of one of his

offensive linemen for a fumble that New England returned for a touchdown in a 49-19 Thanksgiving rout.

"It is like my favorite holiday, so that's not cool," Sanchez said. "It was a bummer. The game plan was to try not to do that. And we accomplished that."

This time, Sanchez had his first scoring run since Dec. 24, 2011, with the Jets — a 2-yarder after faking a handoff to McCoy on the zone read. McCoy set up the game's first touchdown with a 38-yard run.

Home woes: The Cowboys are 5-0 on the road, which means all four of their losses have come in Jones' spacious, retractable-roof showplace. "I'm disappointed because this was a great day ... we had a great Thanksgiving Day crowd, the stage was set," Jones said.

Maclin's milestone: Eagles receiver Jeremy Maclin secured his first career 1,000-yard season with 108 yards, including a 58-yard catch to set up one of Cody Parkey's three second-quarter field goals. Parkey had four field goals total, the longest from 31 yards.

Still wailing: Cowboys defensive tackle Josh Brent was inactive for the second time since the end of a 10-game suspension for his intoxication manslaughter conviction. He hasn't played since Dec. 2, 2012, six days before the drunken-driving crash that killed teammate Jerry Brown.

Scoreboard

American Conference							Eagles 33, Cowboys 10						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Philadelphia	14	9	7	3	— 33	
New England	9	0	0	.818	357	227	Dallas	10	7	3	0	— 10	
Miami	6	5	0	.545	285	219	First Quarter						11:55
Buffalo	6	5	0	.545	238	207	PHI—Sanchez 2 run (Parkey kick), 11:55						
N.Y. Jets	2	9	0	.182	177	303	PHI—J. Matthews 27 pass from Sanchez (Parkey kick), 1:08						
Second Quarter													
Indianapolis	7	4	0	.636	333	256	PHI—Murray 1 run (Balkick), 14:56						
Houston	5	6	0	.455	242	226	PHI—FG Parkey 31, 12:10						
Tennessee	2	7	0	.286	192	293	PHI—FG Parkey 22, 1:35						
Jacksonville	1	10	0	.091	161	305	PHI—FG Parkey 20, 1:08						
Third Quarter													
Cincinnati	7	3	1	.682	246	234	PHI—McCoy 38 run (Parkey kick), 7:20						
Baltimore	7	4	0	.636	265	208	PHI—FG Parkey 20, 1:08						
Pittsburgh	7	4	0	.636	268	263	PHI—McCoy 38 run (Parkey kick), 7:20						
Cleveland	7	4	0	.636	242	219	PHI—FG Parkey 20, 1:08						
Fourth Quarter													
Denver	8	3	0	.727	332	260	PHI—McCoy 38 run (Parkey kick), 7:20						
Kansas City	7	4	0	.636	261	195	PHI—FG Parkey 20, 1:08						
San Diego	7	4	0	.636	245	216	PHI—McCoy 38 run (Parkey kick), 7:20						
Oakland	1	10	0	.091	176	285	PHI—FG Parkey 20, 1:08						
National Conference													
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Philadelphia	14	9	7	3	— 33	
Philadelphia	9	3	0	.750	375	285	Dallas	10	7	3	0	— 10	
Dallas	8	4	0	.667	302	273	First Quarter						11:55
N.Y. Giants	3	8	0	.273	233	294	SEA—Turbill 13 pass from Wilson (Haukschka kick), 1:25						
Washington	4	9	0	.364	262	281	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Atlanta	4	0	0	.667	231	207	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
New Orleans	4	7	0	.364	288	286	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Carolina	3	7	1	.318	215	300	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Tampa Bay	3	0	0	.182	207	300	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Green Bay	8	4	0	.667	231	207	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Detroit	8	4	0	.667	231	207	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Chicago	5	7	0	.417	253	337	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Minnesota	4	4	0	.364	202	244	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Arizona	9	0	0	.818	240	195	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Seattle	8	4	0	.667	298	221	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
San Francisco	7	5	0	.583	231	244	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
St. Louis	4	7	0	.364	209	285	SEA—FG Haukschka 36, 5:40						
Thursday's games													
Detroit 34, Chicago 17													
Philadelphia 33, Dallas 10													
Seattle 19, San Francisco 3													
Sunday's games													
Tennessee at Houston													
Oakland at St. Louis													
Carolina at Minnesota													
Washington at Indianapolis													
Cleveland at Buffalo													
San Diego at Baltimore													
N.Y. Giants at Jacksonville													
Cincinnati at Tampa Bay													
New Orleans at Pittsburgh													
Arizona at Atlanta													
New England at Green Bay													
Denver at Kansas City													
Monday's game													
Miami at N.Y. Jets													
Tuesday, Dec. 4													
Dallas at Chicago													
Sunday, Dec. 7													
N.Y. Giants at Tennessee													
Carolina at New Orleans													
N.Y. Jets at Minnesota													
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati													
St. Louis at Washington													
Baltimore at Miami													
Houston at Jacksonville													
Cleveland at Tampa Bay													
San Diego at Baltimore													
San Francisco at Buffalo													
San Francisco at Oakland													
Seattle at Philadelphia													
New England at San Diego													
Monday, Dec. 8													
Atlanta at Green Bay													
Thursday													
Lions 34, Bears 17													
Chicago	14	3	0	— 17	Det	34							
CHI—Jeffery 10 pass from Turter (Gould kick), 10:33													
DET—G. Prater 46, 45:1													
DET—Jeffery 6 pass from Turter (Gould kick), 3:35													
Second Quarter													
DET—Johnson 25 pass from Stafford (Prater kick), 12:55													
DET—Bell 1 run (Prater kick), 3:18													
DET—Johnson 6 pass from Stafford (Prater kick), 2:58													
Third Quarter													
CHI—FG Gould 36, 8:54													
Fourth Quarter													
DET—Bell 1 run (Prater kick), 14:57													
DET—FG Prater 40, 4:0													
A—64,175	Chi	Det											
First downs	26	18											
Total Net Yards	269	474											
Rushes—yards	113	293											
Passing	256	383											
Turnovers	25	44											
Kickoff Returns	1-24	3-65											
Interceptions Ret.	0	2-6											
Comp-Att-In	31mg-2	34-45-2											
Sacked-Yards Lost	3-24	2-7											
Punts	6-64-0	3-67-1											
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	2-1											
Penalties-Yards	5-41	5-38											
Time of Possession	32:42	33:18											
INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS													
Rushing—Chicago	24	Forté 5-6, Custer 1-(minus 1)	Det.	31-21-0									
Passing—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Receiving—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
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Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
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Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
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Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Offensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
Defensive—Chicago	24	Det.	31-21-0										
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NFL

Lions feast upon struggling Bears

Johnson reels in 11 catches for 146 yards as Detroit begins homestand

By NOAH TRISTER
The Associated Press

DETROIT—The Detroit Lions began the homestand that could make or break their season with the type of offensive performance their fans have been waiting for.

Matthew Stafford threw for 390 yards and a pair of touchdowns to Calvin Johnson, and the Lions beat the Chicago Bears 34-17 on Thursday. Johnson had 11 catches for 146 yards in perhaps his best performance of the season.

Johnson surpassed 10,000 yards receiving in his 115th game, becoming the fastest to reach that mark. More importantly, his big game quieted some concerns that he was slowing down. Johnson missed a month with an ankle injury earlier this season and was held under 60 yards in back-to-back games before Thursday's breakthrough.

Detroit gained a season-high 474 yards in its highest-scoring game since a 35-point showing in the season opener against the New York Giants.

"We came home and handled business. That's what we wanted," center Dominic Raiola said. "We're in a good spot right now but we know there's a lot of work ahead."

After losing at Arizona and New England and falling out of first place in the NFC North, the Lions (8-4) began a three-game stretch at home against teams with losing records. They spotted Chicago a 14-3 first-quarter lead before scoring three consecutive touchdowns in the second.

Chicago (5-7) looked sharp early on, but with no running game to speak of against Detroit's defensive front, the Bears quickly gave away their early lead.

"We just didn't do enough and it starts with me," coach Marc Trestman said. "I'm looking inside and am accepting accountability for this loss, obviously. We just couldn't get it done today and didn't have enough ammunition to stop them or continue drives."

The Lions have won back-to-back games on Thanksgiving after losing their previous nine. They beat Green Bay 40-10 last year.

A lot was expected of Stafford this season, especially after the arrival of coach Jim Caldwell, who took over in January. The 26-year-old quarterback has put up fairly ordinary numbers in 2014, but he was very good Thursday.

"Hopefully, this game gives us some confidence and gives us a little bit of momentum," Stafford said.



Rick Osentoski/AP

Lions running back Jolique Bell jumps over the Chicago Bears defense for a 1-yard touchdown during the first half of Thursday's game in Detroit. The Lions won 34-17.

Sherman, Seattle shut down San Francisco

By JANIE MCCAULEY
The Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — At midfield, Richard Sherman cradled a game ball in his right hand and took a chop up of a turkey leg with his left.

Seattle's do-everything, unguarded cornerback certainly earned his postgame feast after a two-interception night that kept the defending Super Bowl champion Seahawks right in the NFC West race with a 19-3 win against the San Francisco 49ers on Thursday.

Just like 10 months earlier with that game-sealing deflection in the end zone during the NFC championship game, Sherman was in the middle of all the big plays. With Michael Crabtree the target again, too.

Sherman set up the only touchdown of the game with another key defensive play in this heated rivalry, then made a second interception with the 49ers driving late, and the Seahawks ended a five-game losing streak on San Francisco's home field.



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch runs against San Francisco 49ers linebacker Aldon Smith (99) during the second quarter of Thursday's 19-3 Seattle victory in Santa Clara, Calif.

"The second one was pretty entertaining. I was laughing the whole time," Sherman said. "They threw it. I said, 'Way to be, way to be.'"

Sherman and Crabtree were at the center of the decisive play in January's NFC title game, when Sherman tipped the ball to Malcolm Smith for an interception with less than a minute remaining in the Seahawks' 23-17 victory. Sherman later called Crabtree "mediocre."

Asked about Crabtree on Thursday, Sherman quipped: "History? What history?"

The Seahawks kept Crabtree and quarterback Colin Kaepernick off balance all night.

"He said he was throwing to the open man. He didn't care who was out there," Sherman said of Kaepernick. "I was the open man."

Russell Wilson threw a 13-yard touchdown pass to Robert Turbin in the first quarter, and the Seahawks (8-4) won by the same score as their victory over first-place Arizona five days earlier.

SPORTS



Longhorns laid low
No. 6 TCU makes statement with
rout of Texas | **College football, Page 29**

NFL



Philadelphia running back LeSean McCoy, left, celebrates in front of Dallas' Barry Church as he sprints into the end zone during Thursday's game in Arlington, Texas.

TIM SHARP/AP



Eagles QB
Mark Sanchez

TIM SHARP/AP

Thanksgiving feast

Eagles chew up division rival Cowboys

BY SCHUYLER DIXON
The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — LeSean McCoy said beating Dallas with the NFC East lead on the line felt a lot like last year, when Philadelphia wrapped up a playoff berth in the Cowboys' \$1.2 billion stadium.

There's one big difference for the Eagles, though: They

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■ No trouble for Lions, Seahawks, Page 31

might have to do it again in a rematch on their home field next month to make sure they get back to the postseason.

McCoy ran for 159 yards and a touch-

down, Mark Sanchez had his first scoring run in almost three years and the Philadelphia defense took advantage of a ragged Tony Romo in a 33-10 victory Thursday.

"This is only the first half," linebacker Connor Barwin said. "We have them again in two weeks and we need to back it up again. The same way we did today, if not even better."

The Eagles (9-3) opened with quick drives of 80 and 88 yards for touchdowns.

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No. 2 Wisconsin avoids upset bid by Georgetown
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Predators stay red-hot, outlast Oilers in overtime
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